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5 jawans' killing will be avenged: Govt

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Sensex, Nifty hit new all-time closing high

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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India, Russia sign $100B trade & energy deals

PM was conferenced Order of St Andrew the Apostle, Russia's highest civilian honour

MOSCOW, 9 JULY

India and Russia on Tuesday agreed to boost bilateral trade to over USD 100 billion by 2030 by reinvigorating investments, using national currencies for trade and increasing cooperations in sectors ranging from energy to agriculture and infrastructure.

In the 22nd Annual Bilateral Summit between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Moscow, the two sides agreed on nine key areas of cooperations.

The deals were for trade, trade settlement using national currencies, increased cargo turnover through new routes such as the North-South Transport Corridor, the Northern Sea Route and the Chennai-Vladivostok Sea Line, raising volume of trade in agri products, food and fertiliser, deepening cooperation in the energy sector, including nuclear energy, strengthening interaction for infrastructure development, promotion of investments and joint projects across digital economy, collaborating on supply of medicines and development of humanitarian cooperation.

The leaders agreed to aspire "for elimination of non-tariff trade barriers related to bilateral trade between India and Russia" and continue "dialogue in the field of liberalisation of bilateral trade, including the possibility of the establishment of the EAEU-India Free Trade Area".

This to achieve mutually agreed trade volume of more than USD 100 billion by 2030, including increased supplies of goods from India to achieve balanced bilateral trade.

They agreed on "development of a bilateral settlement system using national currencies", the joint statement said.

This means any purchase by India from Russia such as crude oil, can potentially be paid in Indian rupee.

Delivering an unambiguous message, Modi told Putin that a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and peace efforts do not succeed in the midst of bombs and bullets even as he flagged concerns over a missile strike on a children's hospital in Kyiv. Modi said the killing of innocent children is heart-wrenching and very painful, a day after a suspected Russian missile struck a children's hospital in Kyiv triggered global outrage. In his remarks, Modi said dialogue and diplomacy is the only way to find a solution to the Ukraine conflict and India is ready to make all possible contributions in resolving the crisis. Modi was officially conferred the 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle' award by Putin for his contribution to fostering bilateral ties between the two countries. Modi is the first Indian leader to be conferred with this award, which was established in 1698 by Tsar Peter the Great in honour of Saint Andrew, the first apostle of Jesus and patron saint of Russia. *—PTI*

Russian President Vladimir Putin awards PM Narendra Modi with the Order of St Andrew the Apostle in Russia's Kremlin on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

India to open 2 consulates in Russian cities

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced that India has decided to open two new consulates in Kazan and Yekaterinburg cities of Russia in a bid to further boost travel and trade with the country. India currently has two consulates in Russia at St Petersburg and Vladivostok. Yekaterinburg is Russia's fourth largest city and is an important economic centre. It had hosted four FIFA World Cup matches in 2018. *—PTI*

Zelenskyy 'disappointed' as Modi hugs 'criminal' Putin

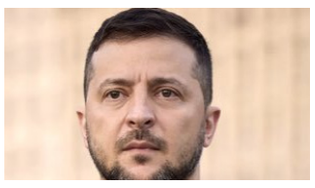
KYIV, 9 JULY

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday criticized Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for embracing Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Moscow on the day the Kremlin's forces bombed a children's hospital in Kyiv.

"It is a huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts to see the leader of the world's largest democracy hug the world's most bloody criminal in Moscow on such a day," Zelenskyy wrote, referring to the deadly Russian attacks.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh criticised Modi for meeting Putin in Ukraine. "Self-styled Vishwaguru, who also gave himself the title of Vishwabandhu, is in Moscow the day a children's hospital in Ukraine is bombed. What happened to the 'Ukraine mein war rukwa di' boast?," Jairam Ramesh said. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3, 5 & 6



Volodymyr Zelenskyy

- "It is a huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts to see the leader of the world's largest democracy hug the world's most bloody criminal," Zelenskyy said.

Russia to discharge all Indians fighting in war

MOSCOW, 9 JULY

Russia has broadly heeded to India's call to end the recruitment of Indians as support staff to the Russian military and ensure repatriation of those still working in the force, top sources said on Tuesday. It is learnt that Moscow agreed to release the Indians after the issue was brought up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an informal meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday. Last month, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the issue of Indian nationals serving with the Russian Army remains a matter of "utmost concern" and demanded action from Moscow over it. *—PTI*

People unaware that consent for sex is 18, not 16: SC

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Supreme Court said the public is largely unaware that the age of consent for sex with a girl has been raised from 16 to 18 years, on Tuesday. A Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Sanjay Karol and PV Sanjay Kumar dismissed Madhya Pradesh's government appeal against acquittal of an accused in a case under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POSCO Act). The age of consent was increased from 16 to 18 in India in 2012. Madhya Pradesh High Court had last year urged the Central government to reduce the age of consent for sex to 16, to redress the "injustice going on with adolescent boys" who enter into consensual sexual relationships.

—Courtesy, Bar & Bench

CBI arrests 2 more from Patna in NEET leak case

NEW DELHI, 9 JULLY

CBI has arrested two more people, including a candidate, from Patna in the NEET-UG paper leak case, taking the total number of arrests by the agency to 11, officials said on Tuesday. This is the first time CBI has arrested a candidate in the alleged irregularities in NEET-UG, they said. NEET-UG aspirant Sunny, who hails from Nalanda, and the father of another candidate Ranjit Kumar, who is from Gaya, have been arrested, they said. ***—PTI***

Kukis call for 12-hour shutdown in Manipur

IMPHAL, 9 JULY

A major Kuki organisation of Manipur called for a 12-hour "total shutdown" in the Kuki-majority areas of the ethnic violence-affected state on Wednesday to protest against the arrest of five people belonging to the community.

The tribal body urged all Kuki-Zo regional organisations to abide by the order to express solidarity for the common cause of the people. The deployment of the central security forces in vulnerable areas initially provided a sense of safety and security for the Kuki-Zo people, but the arrest of two people in Jiribam and three others in Kangpokpi districts since Monday "poses a significant security threat" for them, the statement said. It alleged that the Imphal based militant groups are brandishing sophisticated arms, while the Kuki-Zo people are being terrorised. ***—PTI***

SIT suspects 'big conspiracy' in Hathras stampede

LUCKNOW, 9 JULY

The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday suspended the local SDM, a circle officer and four others based on the SIT report on the Hathras stampede that did not rule out a "big conspiracy" behind the incident.

The SIT report also flagged lapses on the part of the local administration that led to the incident that claimed 121 lives on 2 July. The stampede at the 'satsang' was held by self-styled godman Surajpal alias Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba.

The report held the organisers responsible for the stampede, claiming they did not make arrangements to manage the crowd and also fixed the responsibility of administration.

It said the police and administration did not take the event seriously and failed to provide proper information to senior officers.

"The Sub-District Magistrate of Sikandrarau granted permission for the event without inspecting the venue and did not even inform the senior officials," the report said.

"The organisers took permission to organise the programme by hiding facts. The conditions applicable for permission were not followed. The organisers did not make adequate and smooth arrangements by inviting an unexpected crowd," the SIT report said. People associated with the organising committee have been found guilty of creating chaos, it said.

—PTI

PHOTO: PTI

CABINET TO DECIDE

DKS wants Ramanagara to be renamed B'luru South

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

A proposal to rename the neighbouring Ramanagara district as 'Bengaluru South' has once again gained steam. A delegation led by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and submitted a memorandum to raise the pitch.

The proposal could shoot up property prices in regions.

The delegation consisting of district in-charge Minister Ramalinga Reddy, former Bengaluru Rural MP DK Suresh, several Congress legislators and former legislators from the district has also proposed that Ramanagara town, about 50 km from here, remain as the headquarters of the renamed district. BJP attacked Congress for pursuing the proposal wondering if the idea was borne out of a dislike for the name "Ram." BJP MLA CN Ashwath Narayan said , "Renaming Ramanagara, which holds the name of Lord Ram, is unacceptable. The claim that this will raise real estate prices is just an excuse. The person who took the medical college to Kanakapura has not developed Ramanagara. This is a ploy to gain more money." *—Salar News*

>>>More on Page 2

DK Shivakumar **PHOTO: PTI**

Encounter breaks out in Doda

JAMMU, 9 JULY

An encounter broke out between security forces and terrorists in a remote forest area in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda on Tuesday, officials said. The gunfight started when security forces launched a search and cordon operation in Ghadi Bhagwah forest following information about the presence of terrorists in the area, they said.

Heavy firing was going on between the two sides when last reports were received, the officials said. *—PTI*

DRIVER SAVES THE DAY

BMTC bus catches fire near MG Road

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

A Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus travelling from Koramangala depot towards Shivaji Nagar narrowly avoided disaster on Tuesday after the vehicle caught fire near the MG Road signal. Due to the quick thinking of the bus driver Rajkumar all 30 passengers onboard escaped unharmed.

The incident took place around 9 am when the bus came to a halt at the traffic signal.

Upon restarting the bus, Rajkumar noticed smoke emanating from the engine compartment. He immediately attempted to douse the flames with water but was unsuccessful.

Rajkumar evacuated all 30 passengers through the back door due to which there were no casualties. Once everyone was safely off the bus, he promptly alerted the fire department. Firefighters arrived at the scene and extinguished the blaze.

The fire did not spread to surrounding vehicles as traffic had cleared after the signal change. The cause of the fire is still under investigation by BMTC officials. *—Salar News*

A BMTC bus catches fire on the busy MG Road near Anil Kumble Circle in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

SENA NETA'S SON ARRESTED IN BMW HIT & RUN CASE

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

Mihir Shah, 24, the absconding accused in the BMW hit-and-run case and son of a Shiv Sena leader Rajesh Shah, was arrested on Tuesday by Mumbai Police from Virar near Mumbai, two days after he allegedly rammed his luxury car into a two-wheeler, killing a woman and injuring her husband.

Preliminary investigations showed that the luxury car driven by Mihir rammed into a two-wheeler from behind in the Worli area on Sunday morning, resulting in the death of Kaveri Nakhwa, 45, who was riding pillion, while her husband Pradeep survived with injuries.

Kaveri Nakhwa was dragged for around 1.5 km by the speeding car before Mihir pulled it over, swapped the seat with his driver, and fled in another vehicle, according to police.

In a related development, the state Excise Department has sealed a bar in the Juhu area of Mumbai visited by Mihir and his friends on Saturday night, hours before he allegedly took the wheel of the car involved in the crash, an official said.

The bar manager had served hard liquor to Mihir, who is yet to complete 24 years of age, violating Maharashtra's legal drinking age of 25, he said.

The action to seal the bar was taken on the orders of the district collector for violation of rules, the excise department official said. *—PTI*

COURT DENIES SURAJ REVANNA BAIL

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

A court in Bengaluru on Tuesday rejected the bail application filed by MLC Suraj Revanna, elder son of HD Revanna and brother of Prajwal Revanna, in connection with a sexual abuse case. Magistrate KN Shivakumar, who had reserved orders on Suraj's bail plea on 4 July this year, rejected the application after taking into account the objections raised by the prosecution. Prosecutor Ashok Naik had opposed the bail plea arguing that there existed evidence against the accused. *—Courtesy, Bar and Bench*

'RS 14,730 CR SCAM'

SC/ST funds diverted in K'taka: SC panel

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

The National Commission for Scheduled Castes has sought a detailed report from the Karnataka government over the alleged diversion of SC/ST funds.

Following a media report, the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) has taken suo motu cognisance of the issue regarding the alleged diversion of Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) funds in Karnataka.

In an official communication addressed to the chief secretary of Karnataka, the NCSC highlighted that the Karnataka government has decided to reallocate Rs 14,730 crore, originally earmarked under SCSP and TSP, to implement various welfare schemes known as the Five Guarantees Schemes.

The commission also underscored the importance of these funds in promoting the social and economic welfare of the SC/ST communities.

In the letter to Karnataka chief secretary, the NCSC has requested a detailed report from the State government on this matter within seven days, stressing the urgency and importance of the situation.

The NCSC said the Karnataka chief Secretary is expected to provide a comprehensive report, explaining the rationale behind the fund diversion and outlining measures to ensure that the welfare of SC/ST communities is not compromised. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: PIXABAY

23 school vehicle drivers booked for drunk driving

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

The Bengaluru Traffic Police on Tuesday has booked as many as 23 school vehicle drivers under the Motor Vehicles Act who were allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol. A drive conducted from 7 am to 9 am, a total of 3,016 school vehicles were checked and 23 drivers were found positive for alcohol test, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) MN Anucheth said. "During the special drive, 11 vehicles were found without fitness certificate, which will be handed over to concerned Regional Transport Offices along with driving licenses. Such special drives will continue regularly to ensure safety of students and other road users," Anucheth added. *—PTI*

Burglars loot elderly couple in Mangaluru

MANGALURU, 9 JULY

Burglars broke into a house in Kotekani, Mangaluru in the wee hours of Tuesday and decamped with gold jewellery and cash, police said. According to police, the burglars after taking gold and Rs 10,000 cash threatened the couple and secured the keys of a car and drove away. The car was found abandoned near Mulky town about 23 km from Mangaluru. Police recovered a mobile phone in the abandoned vehicle. The incident was reported in Urva police limits. The burglars gained entry into the house by cutting the grills of the window. Only an elderly couple was staying in the house at the time of the theft, they said. This is the second housebreak incident in the past week with a similar 'modus operandi.' Police suspect that this gang was carrying out a survey of areas they wanted to target and only chose houses in which only elderly people were staying. *—PTI*

CID files chargesheet in Neha murder case

HUBBALLI, 9 JULY

The Criminal Investigation Department on Tuesday filed the chargesheet in connection with the Neha Hiremath murder case. The 23-year-old Neha, daughter of the Congress Councillor of Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation, was stabbed to death by her former classmate Fayaz Khodunaik on the campus of her college in Dharwad on 18 April. "The CID have filed a 483-page chargesheet in the court. I have not got the copy of it. Once I get it, I will discuss with my lawyer and come to you," Niranjan Hiremath told reporters. He thanked the police department and state Home Minister G Parameshwara for filing the chargesheet within the stipulated 90 days. The murder had sparked widespread condemnation and protests. *—PTI*

DKS raises pitch to rename Ramanagara as B'luru South

A delegation led by Shivakumar submitted a memorandum to CM

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

A proposal to rename the neighbouring Ramanagara district as 'Bengaluru South' has once again gained steam. A delegation led by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and submitted a memorandum to raise the pitch.

Ramanagara was carved out from the Bengaluru Rural district on 23 August, 2007, comprising Ramanagara, Channapatna, Kanakapura and Magadi taluks when JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy was the chief minister.

Speaking to reporters, Shivakumar said the proposal might be placed before the Cabinet to "discuss and decide."

Kumaraswamy had earlier threatened to go on a fast unto death if the government decided to go ahead with the proposal to rename the district.

Ramanagara district is the political turf of Kumaraswamy as he has represented Ramanagara and Channapatna Assembly segments, and also had been an MP from the region.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and others submit a memorandum to the Chief Minister in Bengaluru on Tuesday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

The proposal has gained significance ahead of Channapatna Assembly bypolls -- the date for which is yet to be announced -- necessitated following Kumaraswamy's election to Lok Sabha from Mandya.

Shivakumar's brother DK Suresh lost the Bengaluru Rural seat to BJP's CN Manjunath in Lok Sabha polls.

Ramanagara district will remain as it is with Ramanagara as headquarters, but the district will be renamed Bengaluru South, Shivakumar, also state Congress chief, said.

Responding to a question on reports regarding the possibility of a second airport for the City coming up either at Ramanagara or Tumakuru, he said: "For that, a technical report has to come. We will have to make it ready by 2032. Infrastructure Development Minister MB Patil is looking into the proposals."

> **We will put out the proposal at cabinet to discuss renaming the Ramanagar district**
> —Siddaramaiah, Karnataka Chief Minister

Noting that earlier Doddaballapura, Nelamangala, Yelahanka, Devanahalli, Anekal, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru East, Hoskote, Ramanagara, Magadi, Kanakapura and Channapatna taluks were part of Bengaluru district, the memorandum said, in 1986 a new Bengaluru Rural district was announced consisting of Doddaballapura, Nelamangala Devanahalli, Hoskote, Channapatana, Ramanagara, Magadi and Kanakapura.

In 2007, keeping Doddaballapura as the centre, Bengaluru Rural district was reconstituted consisting of Hosakote, Nelamangala, and Devanahalli; and a separate Ramanagara district was formed consisting of Magadi, Kanakapura, Channapatna and Ramanagara, with Ramanagara as the headquarters. *—Salar News*

School children wade through a flooded street in Udupi district *PHOTO: PTI*

CM orders urgent compensation for flood-affected areas

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

As the threats of floods emerge in the State due to the heavy rains during the monsoon seasons the Chief Minister Siddaramiah instructed the officials to give out the compensation of Rs 783.69 crore under the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) immediately.

During a review meeting with District Deputy Commissioners and Zilla Panchayat chief executive officers on Tuesday, he said, "Currently 20.38 lakh people in these areas are at risk of being affected by floods. 3,714 house and crop damage occurred during the pre-monsoon season and the compensation should be released immediately."

Discussing the preparations for the upcoming floods due to heavy rains, Siddaramiah said, "Earlier, we had identified 1,200 villages in 177 taluks and 2,205 villages under gram panchayats as flood-affected areas across the State. In addition, 201 flood spots have been identified within Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) limits. Rs 783.69 crore is available in the bank account of the district collectors' officials. This compensation should be promptly delivered to those affected."

Declining soil fertility in the State

The Chief Minister cited a report that highlighted the condition of the State's soil fertility. According to 2022-2023 report, 33.78 per cent of the soil is acidic, and 26.7 per cent is alkaline. Only about 40 per cent of the soil remains natural. This degradation has led to an increased use of fertilisers.

In 2017-18, 16.66 lakh soil samples were tested and revealed 50.41 per cent had natural carbon deficiency, 73.77 per cent nitrogen deficiency and 24.94 per cent had potassium deficiency. Siddaramiah announced free organic seeds to improve soil quality and Organic fertilisers to be provided to farmers.

Recommendations for Animal Husbandry Department

Siddaramiah announced gun licenses should be issued to nomadic shepherds to protect them from wild animal attacks.

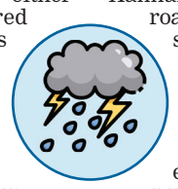
Siddaramiah also instructed the animal husbandry officials to conduct a vaccination drive at the house of flocks of sheep. Rs 10,000 and Rs 5,000 compensation have been announced for the sudden death of livestock of the farmers. *—Salar News*

Heavy rain in Udupi, low-lying areas inundated

MANGALURU /UDUPI/ SIRSI, 9 JULY

Normal life was disrupted in the coastal and Western Ghats districts of Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada following heavy to very heavy and incessant rains over the past few days, officials said.

Torrential rains continued to lash Udupi on Tuesday. Several low-lying areas in Karkala, Kundapur, Thekkatte, Hirgana, Basruru, Barkuru, Nitturu, Kaup and Udyavara were still under knee-deep water and roads were either blocked or rendered unmotorable, officials said. A part of the National Highway 66 between Puttur in Udupi and Kolalagiri Road also witnessed waterlogging.



As a result of the waterlogging, a car driver reportedly misjudged the depth of the water on the road and drove straight into a bog nearby and the vehicle got stuck on the Kannarpady-Kadekaru link road in Udupi rural police station limits.

Officials said all four people in the car got out safely . The vehicle which was stuck in the water was later recovered by Fire department personnel with the help of local people. Dakshina Kannada district which experienced heavy to very heavy rain on Monday, saw rainfall activity continue on Tuesday with places like Mangaluru, Puttur, Bantwal. Belthangady, Sullia and the ghat section of the Gundya-Shirady sector continued to receive heavy rains on Tuesday which led to traffic snarls on various stretches, officials said. The Dakshina Kannada administration put the district on 'Red Alert' on Tuesday following which the schools and PU colleges were closed.*—Salar News*

A NEW CHAPTER

77 prisoners who were serving life sentences were released from prisons all over the State on Tuesday. They were freed early for their good conduct *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

RaGa should be slapped, says BJP MLA

MANGALURU, 9 JULY

Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Bharath Shetty on Monday sparked controversy, saying that Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition (LoP) and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should be "slapped" for his alleged anti-Hindu remarks.

Addressing a protest march in Mangaluru on Monday, a BJP MLA said that Congress leaders who call themselves Hindus 'only talk about violence, hatred and lies'.

"He follows anti-Hindu policy. If you look at his statement, it is clear that he is a big madman. He should have slapped Gandhi on the cheek inside the Parliament," he said. He further attacked Gandhi for holding a picture of the Hindu god Shiva, and said, "He calls Hindus violent. Madman does not know that if Lord Shiva opened his third eye, he (LoP) would turn into ashes."

BJP MLA alleged that Gandhi changed his stance based on the region he visits and claimed, "When he comes to Gujarat, Gandhi becomes an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. When he goes to Tamil Nadu he becomes an atheist, when he goes to Kerala he becomes secular."

He said that "After getting only 99 Lok Sabha seats in General Election; Gandhi is claiming to have made a great achievement." *—ANI*

SIT grills former minister in ST Dvpt Corp scam

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Tuesday questioned former scheduled tribes welfare minister B Nagendra for five hours in connection with the illegal diversion of money from Karnataka State Valmiki ST Development Corporation.

Nagendra had resigned on 6 June after the corporation's Accounts Superintendent Chandrasekharan P died by suicide on 26 May.

In the suicide note, he alleged that there was an unauthorised transfer of Rs 187 crore belonging to the state-run Corporation from its bank account. Further, Rs 88.62 crore was illegally deposited into various accounts of some IT companies and a Hyderabad-based cooperative bank. While the State government has constituted the SIT to investigate it, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is also probing it simultaneously based on a complaint by the Union Bank of India.

Reacting to it, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said he has no information about the audio. "We have given a free hand to the investigation team," Shivakumar added that already the minister has resigned from his position and truth will come out soon.*—PTI*

HC dismisses Chinese nat'l plea to leave India

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

The Karnataka High Court has dismissed a petition filed by a Chinese national accused in alleged loan app scams, seeking permission to travel back to her country pending trial on the grounds of meeting her ailing father.

A single judge bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the order on the plea by 42-year-old Hu Xiaolin, who is allegedly involved in a series of Chinese loan app scams known as "Power Bank app scam", in which customers were coerced and cheated of several crores of rupees in Karnataka and Kerala.

The court took note of the Chinese Criminal Code, according to which once a person becomes an accused, he is not permitted to move out of the country till the trial gets completed. "The petitioner being a Chinese national is undoubtedly aware of the law that prevails in China in treatment to (of) a foreign national or an alien, as described in its laws. If laws in China prohibit such exit of a foreign national under the aforesaid circumstances, laws of India cannot be made flexible on any score whatsoever, as it is a case of a Chinese national who is involved in multiple crimes," it said.

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

- The court said that, if the petitioner is permitted to move out of the shores of the nation, despite the plethora of crimes pending against her

The court also said that, if the petitioner is permitted to move out of the shores of the nation, despite the plethora of crimes pending against her, it would become impossible to conclude trial, as it would be permitting her to flee justice and create a dent in the majesty of law.

According to sources, the petitioner submitted that the Kerala high court had permitted her to visit China and come back in connection with cases registered in Kerala.

—PTI

KUMTA TO KENSINGTON

An unsung hero, throwdown specialist Raghu helped script WC victory

Virat Kohli with Raghavendra *PHOTO: X*

DANIEL GEORGE
BENGALURU, 9 JULY

"Facing Raghu's 150 kilometres per hour deliveries in the nets make the fastest bowlers in the world seem like medium pacers during matches," said star batsman Virat Kohli about Indian team's throwdown specialist Raghavendra during 2017 Champions Trophy in England.

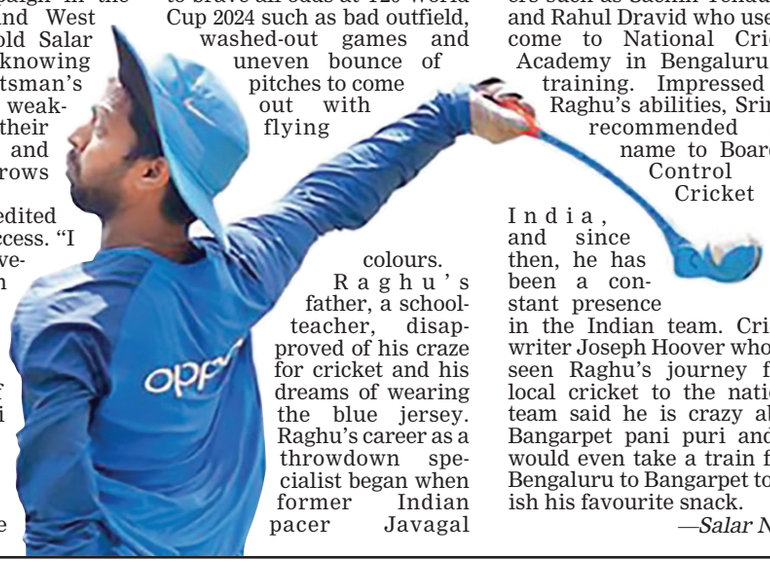
Meet Raghavendra, fondly called Raghu, who has been with Indian cricket team since 2011. The native of Kumta in Uttara Kannada uses a sidearm ball thrower, a cricketing tool shaped like a long spoon, to hurl the ball at speeds ranging from 140-150kmph to test the batters in the nets.

With his ability to deliver balls at speeds higher than bowling machines and from multiple angles, Raghu has been instrumental in helping generations of Indian batsmen adjust to the speed and bounce of pitches in Australia and South Africa. Back home at Kumta after a successful World Cup campaign in the United States and West Indies, Raghu told Salar News "After knowing about a batsman's strengths and weaknesses, I watch their foot movements and adjust my throws accordingly."

Kohli once credited Raghu for his success. "I believe the improvement the Indian team has shown while playing fast bowling since 2013 is because of Raghu," Kohli said.

Raghu said he owed everything to Virat Kohli. "I felt sad when he announced retirement after T20 World Cup."

The throwdown specialist said the Indian team has had to brave all odds at T20 World Cup 2024 such as bad outfield, washed-out games and uneven bounce of pitches to come out with flying colours.



Raghu's father, a schoolteacher, disapproved of his craze for cricket and his dreams of wearing the blue jersey. Raghu's career as a throwdown specialist began when former Indian pacer Javagal Srinath introduced him to Karnataka Ranji team in Bengaluru. Raghu also provided throwdowns to Indian players such as Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid who used to come to National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru for training. Impressed by Raghu's abilities, Srinath recommended him name to Board of Control for Cricket in India, and since then, he has been a constant presence in the Indian team. Cricket writer Joseph Hoover who has seen Raghu's journey from local cricket to the national team said he is crazy about Bangarpet pani puri and he would even take a train from Bengaluru to Bangarpet to relish his favourite snack.

—Salar News

FIR filed against Kohli's restaurant in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 9 JULY

An FIR has been registered against the manager of One8 Commune, a restaurant co-owned by cricket star Virat Kohli, and four other establishments under the Karnataka Police Act for violation at Cubbon Park police station for allegedly operating beyond permitted hours, police said on Tuesday. A special drive was conducted on July six following complaints that many restaurants and pubs in central Bengaluru were operating beyond the stipulated closing time of 1 am, they said. According to the police, when a sub-inspector of Cubbon Park police station, who was on patrolling duty, reached One8 Commune at around 1.20 am, it was found that the manager was allegedly still operating the pub.

—PTI

Guj cops register FIR over deepfake video of Fin Min

AHMEDABAD, 9 JULY

Gujarat Police have registered an FIR against a person for sharing a deepfake video of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on GST, state minister Harsh Sanghavi said on Tuesday. The video clip shows Sitharaman purportedly giving a byte to the media and terming Goods and Services Tax as the Gopaniya Suchna Tax. It was shared by one Chirag Patel on his X handle. As per his X (formerly Twitter) profile, Patel is based in the USA. Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi said the "deceptive act of spreading deep fake videos to mislead citizens is abhorrent". "Gujarat Police have registered an FIR against this person for spreading this deep fake video. Trying to mislead citizens. Let's not fall prey to such manipulative tactics and prioritise truth and accountability in our digital spaces," he tweeted. *—PTI*

BJP appoints MLA Mohan Lal Badoli as Haryana Prez

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

BJP on Tuesday appointed MLA Mohan Lal Badoli, a seasoned organisational leader associated with RSS, its Haryana unit president as it looks to strengthen its support base ahead of assembly polls in the state. A sitting MLA, Badoli lost the Lok Sabha election from Sonipat to his Congress rival in a close contest. Badoli made his maiden entry to the Haryana Assembly in 2019 from the Rai seat, the first time the BJP won from the constituency. Jats are the largest caste in the northern state. Though there is no census along caste lines, they are estimated to be around 27 per cent of the state's population. Badoli replaces Chief Minister Nayab Saini, who continued to hold the charge following his elevation as head of the state government. BJP sources said the party is likely to make more key appointments. *—PTI*

VHP wants Muslims to stop sale of puja items near temples

KOLKATA, 9 JULY

Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Tuesday claimed that Muslims are selling puja items at various Hindu pilgrimage sites by "concealing" their identity and urged all state governments to take effective steps to prevent them from running such shops "so that the faith of Hindus is not hurt". VHP secretary general Bajrang Bagra also appealed to people to remain vigilant and immediately inform the local administration if they find anyone from the minority community selling puja items near temples and other Hindu religious sites. VHP demands that all the state governments ensure that Muslims do not sell puja items at any Hindu religious site, Bagra said. *—PTI*

Police lathicharge KSU protesters in class 11 seat issue

T'PURAM, 9 JULY

Congress' student wing KSU on Tuesday carried out a march to the state Assembly here in protest against the alleged lack of seats in plus one (class 11) for students, especially in the northern Malabar region of Kerala. Kerala Students Union (KSU) activists marched towards the Assembly, climbed on top of the barricades set up by the police and shouted slogans against the ruling Left government and state General Education Minister V Sivankutty. The police then resorted to use of water cannons to disperse the protestors, but the KSU activists did not budge and were seen throwing sticks and other things at the police. The protest turned violent when protestors clashed with the police personnel, resulting in the use of lathicharge against the activists. *—PTI*

Our pace has surprised the world: PM to Indian diaspora

PM says India will write a new chapter of global growth soon

MOSCOW, 9 JULY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed Indian diaspora in Russia on Tuesday. He said India is undergoing a transformation and the pace of development over the past 10 years has taken the world by surprise.

Modi also added that India was changing as it believes in the strength of its 140 crore citizens who are now dreaming of turning their resolve of 'Viksit Bharat' into reality.

"Today's India is full of self-confidence, unlike the situation before 2014, and this is our biggest capital," Modi said.

"When people like you bless us, even the biggest goals can be achieved. You all know that today's India achieves whatever goal it sets its mind to," he said.

Prime Minister said it was in his DNA to challenge all the challenges and India will write a new chapter of global growth in coming years.

"Our government envisions making India the world's third-largest economy, build three crore homes for the poor and turn three crore poor women in villages to 'lakhpati didi'," the Prime Minister said amid chants of 'Modi, Modi' and 'Modi hai toh mumkin hai'.

"India's development of the past 10 years was just a trailer, we will see much faster growth in the next 10 years," Modi added. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an interaction with the Indian community in Russia at a programme, in Moscow *PHOTO: PTI*

US: Any solution to Ukraine must value its integrity

UNITED STATES, 9 JULY

India is a strategic partner with whom it engages in a full and frank dialogue, the United States has said as it urged New Delhi to make clear to Russia that any resolution to the conflict in Ukraine must respect the UN charter, Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said, "We thought that was an important step to take. And we would urge India, as we do any country when it engages with Russia, to make clear that any resolution to the conflict in Ukraine needs to be one that respects the UN charter, that respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, Ukraine's sovereignty," *—PTI*

BACK TO ROOTS

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during a visit to Churuva Hanuman Temple, in Raebareli, on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

Rahul visits Raebareli, meets family of martyr

RAEBARELI, 9 JULY

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday met the family members of Kirti Chakra recipient Captain Anshuman Singh, whose mother later spoke out against the Agniveer scheme.

Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, also visited AIIMS-Raebareli and met party workers and local residents of his constituency during his short visit before leaving for Lucknow.

"I request the government not to divide the Army into two categories," the late captain's mother Manju Singh told reporters after Gandhi met her at a guest house here.

Speaking further about the about the Army scheme launched in 2022 for short-term recruitment of jawans, Singh said the four-year job role is not appropriate as Agniveers who are let go would struggle to find another suitable career.

"They (Agniveers) will be mentally and physically weak after four years after which they would be unable to pursue their studies... this is not good," she added.

Earlier on the way to Raebareli after landing in Lucknow, Gandhi prayed at a Hanuman temple in Churwa.

After landing at the Chaudhary Charan Singh Airport in Lucknow, Gandhi left by road for Raebareli, which is about 80 km from the state capital.

On the way to Raebareli, he stopped at Churwa temple near Bachchrawan and paid obeisance to Lord Hanuman.

Gandhi reached the Bhuemau guest house, where he met party workers, delegations including that of Indian Industries Association (IIA) and locals, a local party leader said.

Gandhi also visited the martyr's memorial in Lalganj and laid a wreath there and planted a sapling. He also visited AIIMS-Raebareli. *—PTI*

Mahua accuses BJP's Shantanu of smuggling beef

KOLKATA, 9 JULY

TMC MP Mahua Moitra accused Union Minister Shantanu Thakur of "issuing passes" to "smugglers" on the India-Bangladesh border, an allegation that was dismissed by BJP leader.

Moitra shared on X an image of a letter purportedly signed by Thakur and alleged that the union minister had facilitated "smugglers" for transporting "three kg of beef".

Shantanu Thakur *PHOTO: ANI*

"Union Minister has printed forms on official letterhead for @BSF_India 85BN, issuing 'passes' for smugglers on the Indo-Bangla border. In this instance, it was to allow three kgs of beef," Moitra posted on the microblogging site on Monday.

Thakur, a prominent leader of the Matua community in the Bongaon Lok Sabha seat, said, "The allegation is baseless. It appears Mahua Moitra has made it a habit to level unfounded accusations."

"Why would someone smuggle only three kgs of beef? Isn't that absurd? She knows such passes are issued in border areas to ease local issues. She has deliberately concealed this fact," Thakur told PTI.

Moitra had on Monday also shared a post of Nilanjan Das, the general secretary of the TMC IT Cell, where he uploaded a video featuring a person named Jiyarul Ghazi in whose name pass was issued. *—PTI*

Dalits face 'large-scale atrocities': TN Union Min

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Union Minister L Murugan on Tuesday alleged large-scale atrocities were taking place against Dalits in Tamil Nadu and claimed that even political leaders were not safe in the state under the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government.

A delegation of the Tamil Nadu BJP unit, led by the party's state vice president VP Duraisamy, will approach the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and the National Human Rights Commission, urging them to take appropriate action in the matter, Murugan told a press conference at the BJP headquarters here.

"After the DMK came to power in May 2021, there has been a tremendous increase in the atrocities against Dalits in Tamil Nadu. A survey is telling that every year more than 2,000 cases of atrocities against Dalits are filed in the state," Murugan said.

"Recently, K Armstrong, a Dalit leader and BSP state president was murdered," he said, alleging that "even political leaders are not safe" in the state under the DMK rule.

"Scheduled caste leaders and people do not have security. They are facing harassment under the DMK government," he said. *—PTI*

- Survey is telling that every year more than 2,000 cases of atrocities against Dalits are filed in the state. Sheduled caste leaders and people do not have security

ANOTHER FLOGGING CASE

Old video of TMC men torturing woman goes viral, 2 arrested

KOLKATA, 9 JULY

After an old video clip of a woman being assaulted by a group of people in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas came into circulation, Barrackpore police initiated a suo motu case and arrested two people.

While BJP alleged that a person close to the local TMC MLA was behind torturing the girl, the state's ruling party demanded that the video be examined to find out its authenticity.

The reason behind the woman's torture is not yet known.

Police sources said that the video, the authenticity of which was not verified by PTI, was at least a couple of years old.

Clip was posted by BJP's WB President Sukanta *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

The video clip showed some people holding a woman's legs and hands while suspending her in the air, while others were beating her with sticks.

The clip was posted by BJP's West Bengal President Sukanta Majumdar who held arrested Jayant Singh responsible for the incident. *—PTI*

Mallikarjun Kharge *PHOTO: PTI*

GOVT'S ONLY AIM IS TO KEEP YOUTHS JOBLESS: KHARGE

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Modi government has only one mission and that is to "keep the youth jobless", Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge alleged on Tuesday in a scathing attack against the Centre on the issue of unemployment.

Modi government may be refuting independent economic reports like the one by Citigroup on unemployment but how will it deny government data, Kharge asked.

"The truth is that Modi government is solely responsible for shattering the dreams of crores of youth in the last 10 years," he alleged.

According to NSSO's (National Sample Survey Office) Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises, in the manufacturing sector, 54 lakh jobs were lost in unincorporated units in the seven years between 2015 and 2023, he said.

"Modi government beats the drum of employment generation in the Formal sector by showing EPFO data, but even if we assume that data to be true, it has seen a 10% decline in new jobs in 2023," he said.

He said the Modi government rejects independent economic reports because they expose their "shameless attempt to whitewash". *—PTI*

Govt bans Sikhs for Justice for 5 more yrs

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Union Home Ministry has extended the ban imposed on pro-Khalistan group Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) for five years for its anti-India activities.

In a notification issued on Tuesday, Home Ministry said SFJ was declared a banned organisation five years ago under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for its anti-national activities which are prejudicial to the internal security and integrity of the country.

SFJ continues to involve in anti-national and subversive activities in Punjab and elsewhere and intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, it said.

The ministry said SFJ is encouraging and aiding the activities for secession of a part of the Indian Territory from the Union of India and supporting separatist groups fighting for this purpose in India and elsewhere by indulging in activities and articulations intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India.

Considering the role of SFJ in various subversive activities, the Home Ministry extended the ban imposed under the UAPA for five years with effect from 10 July, the notification said. *—PTI*

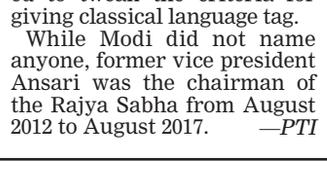


PHOTO: PTI

- SFJ continues to involve in anti-national and subversive activities in Punjab and elsewhere and intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India

Andhra CM: Power sector had Rs 1.29L cr loss in YSRCP rule

AMARAVATI, 9 JULY

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday blamed the previous YSRCP government for pushing the power sector into losses to the tune of over Rs 1.29 lakh crore.

Releasing a white paper on the status of the state's power sector, CM said while the tariff burden on consumers was Rs 32,166 crore, rise in debts of AP power utilities stood at Rs 49,596 crore and losses owing to inefficient governance was Rs 47,741 crore.

He noted that power sector reforms 1.0 and 2.0 were executed during TDP governments.

Naidu attributed the losses incurred by the sector to delay in commissioning thermal power plants, Polavaram Hydro Electric Project, additional impact of short-term power purchases and others.

He pegged the interest burden due to borrowings at Rs 10,892 crore and accumulated losses because of poor performance of distribution companies (DISCOMs) and Andhra Pradesh Power Development Company Ltd (APPDCL) at Rs 9,618 crore & others. *—PTI*

Ramesh seeks breach of privilege motion against PM

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh has sought breach of privilege proceedings against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Rajya Sabha for allegedly making "derogatory" remarks against former chairman of the Upper House Hamid Ansari.

He pointed out that on 10 August, 2017, the Prime Minister in his farewell speech on Ansari's retirement in the Balayogi Auditorium had alluded to then retiring chairman's earlier diplomatic postings in a "mischievous manner".

Modi has broken all parliamentary norms, decorum and, as a matter of fact, set a new low to the dignity of the very office of the Prime Minister of India, he claimed.

Meanwhile, Congress claimed the government is likely to change the criterion for classical language classification and asked whether this is an attempt to prevent Marathi from being recognised as one.

Ramesh shared on X a report of Hindu which claimed that Central government has decided to tweak the criteria for giving classical language tag.

While Modi did not name anyone, former vice president Ansari was the chairman of the Rajya Sabha from August 2012 to August 2017. *—PTI*

ASSEMBLY POLLS

Bypolls to 13 seats in 7 states today

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Bypolls to 13 assembly constituencies in seven states will be held on Wednesday. The electoral exercise, the first since the Lok Sabha elections, will decide the fate of many veterans and some debutantes including Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's wife Kamlesh Thakur.

The assembly seats going to polls are Raiganj, Ranaghat Dakshin, Bagda and Maniktala in West Bengal; Badrinath and Manglaur in Uttarakhand; Jalandhar West in Punjab; Dehra, Hamirpur and Nalagarh in Himachal Pradesh; Rupauli in Bihar; Vikravandi in Tamil Nadu and Amarwara in Madhya Pradesh.

The counting of votes for the bypolls will be held on 13 July *PHOTO: ANI*

The bypolls are to be held against vacancies created either due to deaths or resignation of incumbent members.

In West Bengal, the stakes are high for both the ruling TMC, which is looking to capitalise on its improved performance in the Lok Sabha polls, and the BJP, which is seeking to leverage the significant leads it made in the four constituencies in the parliamentary polls.

TMC has fielded Pandey's wife Supti from the seat. The ruling party has fielded Krishna Kalyani from Raiganj and Mukut Mani Adhikari from Ranaghat Dakshin.

Neighbouring Uttarakhand's Manglaur constituency will also witness a three-cornered fight. The counting of votes for the bypolls will be held on 13 July. *—PTI*

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

UP man arrested for waving Palestinian flag

BHADOHI, 9 JULY

A man was arrested after a video of the Palestinian flag in a procession taken out after the sighting of the Muharram moon here went viral, police said on Tuesday. SHO in-charge of the Aurai police station Sachchidanand Pandey said some youths took out a procession on the National Highway in the Madhosingh area on Sunday night allegedly without permission, during which they waved a Palestinian flag and shouted slogans. The SHO said that after a video of the incident went viral on Monday, Sahil alias Badshah and Gorakh were identified in the investigation. A case has been registered under BNS section 197 (2) and Sahil was arrested on Monday night, police said. He said the police are searching for other accused Gorakh and others on the basis of the video. *—PTI*

Surat building collapse victims' kin get ₹4L from MP

BHOPAL, 9 JULY

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 4 lakh each to the kin of five people from the state killed in a building collapse in Gujarat's Surat city, an official said on Tuesday. The six-storey residential building in Surat's Pal area collapsed on Saturday afternoon, killing seven persons, most of them textile workers from Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, police earlier said. Five of the deceased were from Sidhi district. The deceased are Hiramani Kevat, Lalji Kevat, Shivpuraj Kevat, Pravesh Kevat and Abhilash Kevat. *—PTI*

Woman naxal gunned down in Ch'garh encounter

KANKER, 9 JULY

A woman Naxalite was killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district on Tuesday, police said. The gunfight broke out in a forest near Binagunda village under Chhote Bethiya police station limits when security personnel were conducting an anti-Naxal operation, said Kanker Superintendent of Police Indira Kalyan Elesela. Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Bastar Fighters, and Border Security Force (BSF) were involved in the joint operation, the officer said. After the exchange of fire stopped, the body of a female Naxalite, a .303 rifle, and a .315 bore rifle were recovered from the spot, Elesela added. The slain Naxal prima facie belongs to PLGA (Peoples' Liberation Guerrilla Army) no. 5. Her identity is being established, the SP said. *—PTI*

Woman intervenes in fight between 2 UP groups, killed

BALLIA, 9 JULY

An elderly woman was stabbed to death when she tried to intervene in a fight between two groups here, police said on Tuesday. Two people were injured in the clash that took place in the Uttar Patti locality in Rasda police station area on Monday, they said. The clash broke out between groups led by Dhanji Rajbhar alias Golu and Abhishek Rajbhar. Three people, including Ramvati Devi, 60, were injured in the clash and were rushed to the hospital, said Circle Officer (CO) Mohammad Fahim Qureishi. He said Ramvati Devi, who was stabbed by someone while she was trying to pacify the two sides, died at the hospital. Cross FIRs have been registered in the matter based on complaints filed by the two groups and a detailed investigation is underway, the CO said. *—PTI*

5 jawans' killing will be avenged: Govt

A massive search operation has been launched to hunt down terrorists in areas near Kathua

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

The killing of five Army personnel in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district will not go unavenged and India will defeat the evil forces behind it, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane said on Tuesday.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expressed deep anguish over the killing of the soldiers and asserted that the armed forces are determined to usher in peace in the region.

Five Army personnel were killed and as many injured on Monday when a group of heavily-armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party in Badnota area in Kathua.

The five Army personnel hailed from Uttarakhand

A massive search operation has already been launched to hunt down terrorists responsible for the attack.

Officials said the ground search teams are being supported by helicopter and UAV surveillance. Sniffer dogs and metal detectors are also being employed in the operation with a focus on some dense forest areas in the belt.

Officials said the joint cordon and search operation was launched by army, police and CRPF in in Machedi, Badnote, Kindli and Lohai Malhar areas and a large area has been put under cordon.

Army personnel during a counter-terror operation on Monday after the terrorist attack on an army convoy in Kathua PHOTO: PTI

According to sources, three to four terrorists, mostly foreigners, are believed to have executed the attack. They are part of the same group which was involved in Basangarh attack in which a village defence guard Mohd Sharief was killed in an encounter with terrorists on April 28 in Panara village. *—PTI*

Kathua bears the brunt of terrorists

MACHEDI, 9 JULY

- Villagers played a crucial role in the operation by evacuating the casualties.

Bloodstains on the road and helmets, bullet shells, vehicles with shattered windscreens and flattened tyres... A day after terrorists ambushed an Army patrol, a wooded mountain road on Tuesday told the story of fierce resistance by troops and a gunbattle that carried on for several hours.

On Monday, five Army personnel were killed and five injured when heavily armed terrorists hurled a grenade and opened indiscriminate fire on two army vehicles around 3.30 pm on the Machedi-Kindli-Malhar mountainous road near Badnota.

It was the fifth terror attack in Jammu in a month, an escalation in the relatively peaceful region compared to Kashmir Valley officials attributed to attempts by Pakistani handlers to reignite terrorism.

The terrorists, believed to be a group of three, are likely to have taken cover of the thick foliage on a hill to surprise the troops who retaliated immediately, responding with gunfire and fighting back till the terrorists disappeared into the dense woods, they said.

Amid the telltale signs of the violence, were the two vehicles, parked about 300m away from each other. Given the state of the road, officials said they were probably not going at too much speed and came under fire while they were taking a turn.

Villagers also played a crucial role in the operation, joining rescue efforts to evacuate the casualties. There were anti-Pakistan protests in several areas as agitated villagers took to the streets to condemn the terror attack.

The heavy firing continued till 5 pm followed by intermittent firing for another one hour.

Vijay Kumar, another local, said this is the first terror incident in the village since cross-border terrorism broke out in Jammu and Kashmir over three decades ago.

On 28 April, a village defence guard was killed in an encounter with terrorists in Panara village of Basantgarh.

According to officials, this route could be used by terrorists to reach the hinterland after they managed to sneak in from across the border.

The Jammu region has been shaken by a series of recent ambushes and terror attacks, particularly in the border districts of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, and Reasi. *—PTI*

SC to not review same-sex marriage verdict in open court

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to allow open court hearing of pleas seeking review of its last year's judgement declining legal recognition to same-sex marriage.

In a setback to gay rights activists, a five judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice

DY Chandrachud had on 17 October last year refused to accord legal backing to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage with the exception of those that are recognised by law.

The apex court, however, had made a strong pitch for the rights of queer people so they don't face discrimination in accessing goods and services that are available to others, safe houses known as 'Garima Greh' in all districts to provide shelter to members of the community facing harassment and violence and dedicated hotline numbers which they could use in case of trouble.

Supreme Court PHOTO: PTI

A five judge bench comprising the CJI and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Hima Kohli, B V Nagarathna and P S Narasimha are scheduled to consider in chambers the pleas seeking review of the judgement on 10 July.

On Tuesday, senior advocates Abhishek Singhvi and NK Kaul mentioned the matter and urged the CJI to hear the review petitions in an open court. As per the practice, the review pleas are considered in chambers by judges. *—PTI*

SC raps Centre for not filling PwD vacancies

Supreme Court has ordered appointment of a 100 per cent visually impaired candidate, who cleared the Civil Services Examination (CSE) in 2009, within three months. It slammed the Centre for failing to implement provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act and fill backlog vacancies. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Pankaj Mithal said there is a "gross default" on the part of the Union of India in promptly implementing the provisions of the PWD Act, 1995.

Stopped 14 products' sale: Patanjali to SC

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Patanjali Ayurved Ltd on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that it has stopped the sale of the 14 products whose manufacturing licences were suspended by the Uttarakhand State Licensing Authority in April.

The company told a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Sandeep Mehta that it has issued instructions to 5,606 franchise stores to withdraw these products. It said media platforms have also been instructed to withdraw advertisements of these 14 products in any form. The bench directed Patanjali Ayurved Ltd to file an affidavit within two weeks stating whether the request made to social media intermediaries for the removal of advertisements has been acceded to and whether advertisements of these 14 products have been withdrawn. The bench posted the matter for further hearing on 30July. The court is hearing a plea filed by the Indian Medical Association alleging a smear campaign by Patanjali against the Covid vaccination drive. *—PTI*

HC junks plea over Dalai Lama kissing video row

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Delhi High Court on Tuesday dismissed a public interest litigation over the alleged molestation of a boy by the Dalai Lama, as claimed to have been shown in a video clip that went viral last year. The court said the religious leader was "being playful" and has already apologised for the incident.

In the clip, the Dalai Lama was seen kissing the boy on the lips and asking him to "suck his tongue", which sparked a row on social media. The petitioner, 'Confederation of NGOs', urged the court to pass directions to the authorities to take cognisance of the alleged incident under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and also ensure that the identity of the child is retracted from news portals.

Dalai Lama PHOTO: PTI

A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Manmohan said the PIL can't be entertained and the incident was "not premeditated".

It was also argued that if action is not taken, kissing minors on the lips would be normalised. *—PTI*

MAN SEEKS ₹20L FOR SON'S DEATH IN RAJKOT FIRE

RAJKOT, 9 JULY

The father of a 20-year-old engineering student, who was killed in the TRP game zone fire in Rajkot, moved the district consumer dispute redressal commission, seeking Rs 20 lakh compensation from the firm which ran the ill-fated facility for the death of his son. Twenty-seven people lost their lives in the fire at the game zone. Rasik Vekaria, a businessman, has sought compensation on the ground that his only son Nirav, a second-year engineering student, had a bright academic career ahead before the tragedy struck due to the negligence of the firm and its partners. *—PTI*

Odisha gets Centre's nod to clear 1.5k ha of forest

BHUBANESWAR, 9 JULY

The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has approved the diversion of 1,524.17 hectare of forest land for the construction of an irrigation project in Odisha's Nayagarh district, officials said on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said the state government has been waiting for the approval from the Centre for the last 30 years.

After the completion of the Brutanga project, irrigation facilities can be provided to 23,000 hectares of land, it said. The state government will have to ensure that the compensatory afforestation will be carried out over 1,524.17 hectares of non-forest land already transferred and mutated in favour of the state Forest Department, it said.

The state government will also have to ensure that compensatory afforestation over the non-forest land equal in extent to the forest land being diverted shall be raised within two years from the date of issue of the diversion order, it added. At least 1,000 plants per hectare will be planted on the non-forest land and if it is not possible to plant so many saplings in the area, the balance saplings will be planted in any other forests. *—PTI*

RAIN WOES

Assam flood situation improves, 18.8L still hit

Biker falls off a bike on a road after rains, at ITO in New Delhi, on Tuesday. Heavy rain in the national capital on Tuesday led to |waterlogging at in key areas and set traffic out of gear as commuters struggled to reach their destinations PHOTO: PTI

GUWAHATI, 9 JULY

The flood situation in Assam improved marginally as the number of people reeling under the deluge in 27 districts decreased to around 18.80 lakh, officials said on Tuesday.

The toll in this year's flood, landslide and storm rose to 85 with six more deaths reported on Monday, they said.

Several major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, continued to flow over the danger level at different places with a forecast of rain in isolated places.

Dhubri with nearly 4.75 lakh people reeling under water was the worst-hit district, followed by Cachar with over 2.01 lakh and Barpeta with nearly 1.36 lakh suffering from the flood.

The administration has been operating 543 camps and relief distribution centres in 25 districts, taking care of 3,45,500 displaced people at present, the officials said. The Regional Meteorological Centre in Guwahati said on Monday that a cyclonic circulation lies over Assam and neighbourhoods up to 1.5 km above the mean sea level. *—PTI*

RELIEF FOR MUMBAIKARS POST RAIN CHAOS

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

Rains abated in Mumbai on Tuesday, a day after crippling normal life and disrupting the air, rail and road traffic in the city.

Mumbai witnessed overcast skies on Tuesday morning, but the rains took a break even as schools and colleges were closed in view of the IMD's warning of heavy showers.

Local trains, considered as the lifeline of the country's financial capital, also came back on tracks as there was no waterlogging anywhere since early morning. The suburban services were running with a minor delay of 5-10 minutes, authorities said.

There was no major waterlogging anywhere in the city and suburbs and the road traffic was smooth. IMD Mumbai centre had issued a "red alert" for the city on Tuesday. *—PTI*

Waterlogging after heavy rains in Goa

PANAJI, 9 JULY

Heavy rains lashed parts of Goa for the fourth day in a row on Tuesday, which led to waterlogging in low-lying areas and traffic congestion in state capital Panaji and other cities. India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a 'red alert' for Goa on Tuesday, saying heavy to very heavy rainfall was very likely at a few places and extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places with strong surface winds over North Goa and South Goa districts. A Qatar Airways flight from Doha to Goa was diverted to Bengaluru due to "poor visibility" at the Manohar International Airport (MIA). *—PTI*

GST official buys 640 acres of Satara land

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

Leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra legislative Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar on Tuesday said a GST department official posted in Gujarat has purchased 640 acres land in environmentally sensitive region in Satara district, and alleged that all rules have been violated in the process.

Speaking in the Lower House of the state legislature during a debate on the budgetary demands, he said the land concerned is located in Kandati Valley in Satara.

PHOTO: PTI

"Roads have been constructed on the forest land and no permission has been sought from the Revenue Department before the digging work on the land under its jurisdiction. This has resulted in loss to the revenue department," he said.

"The entire area is environmentally sensitive. Illegal construction is on, the jungle is being plundered and there is a threat to the environment," the Congress leader said. He also alleged corruption in the land acquisition for the proposed Virar-Alibag multimodal corridor. "In 30 to 35 villages, middlemen are involved in acquiring the land of the locals. Farmers have taken objection to the compensation," he said. *—PTI*

BANGLADESHIS INVOLVED

Organ racket busted in Delhi, doc amid 6 held

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

At least seven people, including a 50-year-old Delhi-based woman doctor, have been arrested in an alleged kidney transplant racket running across Bangladesh and the Delhi-NCR region, police officials said on Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Delhi Police Crime Branch had been working on the case for two months. A majority of the donors and recipients are from Bangladesh brought to India on the basis of fake documents for the surgeries, officials said.

The woman doctor as D Vijaya Rajakumari, now working as a kidney transplant surgeon on a "fee-for-service basis" in the Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in southeast Delhi, was allegedly involved in the transplant surgeries of around 15 people from Bangladesh between 2021 and 2023, they said. Dr Rajakumari allegedly conducted the surgeries in Noida-based Yathartha Hospital where she was a visiting consultant. The other arrested people included an assistant of the doctor, identified as Vikram Singh, and three Bangladeshi nationals identified as Rasel, Mihammad Sumon Miyan and Mohammad Rokon alias Rahul Sarkar alias Bijay Mondal. The arrests took place over the last two weeks, police said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (crime) Amit Goel said Rasel is the kingpin of this network, who came to India in 2019 and donated his kidney to one Bangladeshi patient. After his surgery, Rasel started the racket. He would coordinate between different stakeholders and established contact with prospective kidney donors from Bangladesh and patients. *—PTI*

Delhi Police personnel with men who were arrested in an organ transplant racket, in New Delhi on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

1,110 TREES ILLEGALLY CUT

At least 1,100 trees were allegedly cut by Delhi Development Authority to widen the road, in SAARC Chowk, Satbari Chhattarpur, New Delhi, on Tuesday. After backlash, Delhi government has formed a fact finding committee and paid a visit to the area ***PHOTO: PTI***

Battlefield no solution to Ukraine war: India

AMID MODI-PUTIN MEET

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin during summit talks in Moscow ***PHOTO: PTI***

India has consistently maintained that dialogue and diplomacy is the way forward to resolve the Ukraine conflict as a solution can't be found on the battlefield, official sources said after the US flagged concerns over the situation in the eastern European country ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's summit talks with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

India has always called for respecting the UN Charter, including territorial integrity and sovereignty, the sources said.

There is no solution on the battlefield and dialogue and diplomacy is the way forward, they said.

Ahead of Modi-Putin talks, the US called upon India to make it clear to Russia that any resolution of the Ukraine conflict must respect the United Nations charter and Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

"India is a strategic partner with whom we engage in a full and frank dialogue. And that includes our concerns about their relationship with Russia," State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said in Washington when asked about PM Modi's ongoing visit to Moscow.

The American official further added: "We would urge India, as we do any country when it engages with Russia, to make clear that any resolution to the conflict in Ukraine needs to be one that respects the UN charter that respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, Ukraine's sovereignty."

Miller said the US has made clear to India its concerns about New Delhi's relationship with Moscow.

"I will look to Prime Minister Modi's public remarks to see what he talked about. But as I said, we made quite clear directly with India our concerns about their relationship with Russia," he said.

"So we would hope India and any other country, when they engage with Russia, would make clear that Russia should respect the UN charter, should respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity," Miller added.

Prime Minister Modi on Monday began a two-day high-profile visit to Russia, primarily to hold the 22nd India-Russia summit with President Putin.

It is Modi's first trip to Russia since the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The Russian president hosted a private dinner for the Indian prime minister at the former's residence in Novo-Ogarevo on the outskirts of Moscow on Monday night.

The focus of the prime minister's visit is to advance an economic agenda, especially in areas of energy, trade, manufacturing and fertilisers, official sources said.

The war in Ukraine is also set to figure prominently at the talks.

New Delhi has been stoutly defending its "special and privileged strategic partnership" with Russia and maintained the momentum in the ties notwithstanding the Ukraine conflict.

India has not yet condemned Russia's attack on Ukraine and consistently pitched for resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Modi has held several telephonic conversations with Putin and Ukranian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

—PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR

Hurricanes will worsen as Earth gets warmer

When Hurricane Beryl hit the Grenadine Islands on 1 July, its 150-mph winds and awesome storm surge made it the earliest category 5 storm (the most destructive grade on the Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale) the tropical Atlantic has seen.

An active hurricane season in 2024 was forecast well in advance. However, the speed at which Beryl intensified, jumping from tropical-storm strength with winds averaging 70mph to major-hurricane status with 130mph winds in just 24 hours, astounded scientists.

As the world heats faster due to record fossil fuel emissions, research suggests that there are more unpleasant surprises to come.

Water accumulates heat slowly, so it is alarming to see ocean heat near its usual peak at the start of summer. If the tropical Atlantic is already producing such storms, what might the rest of the hurricane season hold?

A bumper season

"If the National Hurricane Centre's early forecast, released 23 May, is right, the North Atlantic could see 17 to 25 named storms, eight to 13 hurricanes, and four to seven major hurricanes by the end of November," says Jhordanne Jones, a postdoctoral research fellow who studies how climate change affects the scientific effort to predict hurricanes at Purdue University.

"That's the highest number of named storms in any preseason forecast."

Seawater hotter than 26 degrees Celsius (79°F) is the lifeblood of hurricanes. Warm, moist air is another prerequisite.

But that's not all these monsters need to reach the limits of their savagery: consistent winds in the upper and lower atmosphere are also necessary to keep cyclonic storms spinning.

A shift from El Niño to La Nina – two opposite phases in a long-term temperature pattern in the Pacific – is expected later this summer. This could tamp down trade winds that might otherwise tear a hurricane's vortex apart. Jones says:

You might expect global heating to bring more hurricanes. But that's not what research has found so far, according to Ben Clarke (University of Oxford) and Friederike Otto (Imperial College London), two scientists who try to attribute the role of climate change in extreme weather events.

Instead, hurricanes that do occur are more likely to be major storms like Beryl. Conditions for breeding hurricanes will be found further north and south of the equator too, since the ocean is heating rapidly everywhere. And Atlantic hurricanes may form outside of the season (June 1 to November 30) that people have come to expect them in.

The trio of deadly hurricanes (Harvey, Irma and Maria) that hammered the Atlantic in quick succession that summer gave people little respite.

These "storm clusters", as climate adaptation researcher Anitha Karthik (Edinburgh Napier University) calls them, are a growing weather trend that is making hurricane-prone areas increasingly inhospitable.

Climate colonialism

"When Hurricane Maria struck the eastern Caribbean island of Dominica in 2017, it caused the kind of devastation which is unthinkable to larger countries," says Emily Wilkinson, an expert in climate resilience at the University of the West Indies.

"The category 5 hurricane damaged 98 per cent of building roofs and caused USD 1.2 billion (950 million pound) in damage. Dominica effectively lost 226 per cent of its GDP overnight."

Vowing to become the first climate-resilient nation, Dominica set about rebuilding homes, bridges and other infrastructure. Conserving the forests and reefs that buffer rain, wind and waves was a priority, Wilkinson says. But in trying to build a sustainable future from the wreckage of Maria, Dominica had to contend with its past as a European colony – a fate shared by many small-island states in the Caribbean and elsewhere.

Climate-vulnerable states can draw from advantages such as these to navigate an uncertain future. But the experiences of Caribbean islands show how a supposedly historical process like colonialism still claims lives in the present.

Mounting storms will add greater urgency to demands for "climate reparations" to the formerly colonised world from rich countries that have contributed most to the climate problem.

—PTI

As the world heats faster due to record fossil fuel emissions, research suggests that there are more unpleasant surprises to come ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

Wrestlers fight back in Olympics after sex harassment scandal

Over a year after protests against sexual harassment allegations shook Indian wrestling, female athletes are gearing up for major events, including the 2024 Paris Olympics. Reetika Hooda almost didn't make it.

The 23-year-old is among the five Indian women wrestlers to qualify for the Olympics this year.

It's a hard-won opportunity, following a year of setbacks that shook her confidence. She knew she needed more training and competitions to improve her game.

A year ago, all wrestling came to a halt in India after its federation chief Brij Bhushan Singh was accused of sexual misconduct. He denies the allegations.

India's sports ministry did not sack Singh but it disbanded the federation after finding several lapses, including the non-compliance of sexual harassment laws, and set up a temporary team to run things.

It was an unprecedented time. Hooda remembers watching the country's most accomplished wrestlers, including her inspiration Sakshi Malik - the only Indian woman to win an Olympic medal in wrestling - camp on the roads of Delhi, demanding Singh's resignation.

The protest made headlines globally, especially after the police detained the wrestlers when they tried to march to India's new parliament building. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) condemned the way the wrestlers were treated and called for an impartial inquiry into their complaints.

"It was sad - not only because of what was happening but also what wasn't," Hooda told me.

Each year, International Olympic Committee designates certain tournaments as qualification events for the games. To compete, wrestlers must earn ranking points in trials, win national competitions, and secure the Wrestling Federation of India's (WFI) approval.

But instead of competing, Hooda stared at an empty sporting calendar for weeks.

"We trained but there were no trials, which meant we could not compete and know our shortcomings. There was a constant fear that we won't be prepared [for the Olympics]," she said.

For a country that's won only 24 medals at individual events in Olympics, with over a quarter in wrestling, this was worrying.

Fresh elections to the WFI were finally held in December 2023, nearly a year after the protests began.

Reetika Hooda is among the 5 Indian women wrestlers to qualify for 2024 Paris Olympics ***PHOTO: X/@UWE***

The wrestlers had asked India's sports minister to prevent people associated with Singh from participating in the election.

Singh did not contest as he had already served the maximum of three terms. But his close aide Sanjay Singh was elected the chief after a landslide victory.

This sparked outrage among women wrestlers. On the same day, Olympic medallist Malik quit the sport in protest.

"Even now I get emotional when I think of that moment," Malik said. "Wrestling took me to such heights, got me love and respect, and I had to give it up."

Young wrestlers were stunned by Malik's decision – but soon, they were back on the mat.

"Sakshi Malik was the reason I took up wrestling," said Tanu Malik, a 20-year-old wrestler in Haryana state.

"So when I saw her crying, I thought to myself, she fought for us, we can't give up now."

From that day, Tanu Malik decided to work harder.

Her training at the state's all-women Yudhvir Wrestling Academy starts at 04:30.

The day starts with a rigorous five-hour fitness session, lifting large truck tyres and practicing wrestling techniques. After a break for food and rest, the women resume training for another five hours in the afternoon.

Girls as young as 12 years sweat it out on the mat. In their free time, they talk about diets and share recipes that would help them stay fit.

None of them want to talk about the alleged sexual harassment at academies or the accusations against the former wrestling chief. However, they are determined not to give up.

Seema Kharab, a coach, says that contrary to expectations, the number of girls at the academy has not dropped since the protests.

"The protests have assured young wrestlers that it is possible to raise their voice, that positive action may be taken and they can get support within the system," she says.

In June, the police charged Brij Bhushan Singh with stalking, harassment, intimidation, and making "sexually coloured remarks", but a court granted him bail

Meanwhile, the new federation chief, Sanjay Singh, has taken on the mantle.

He acknowledged his 30-year relationship with the former chief but dismissed allegations of Brij Bhushan Singh's interference, claiming wrestlers had accepted him as the new head.

He said this was evident from the "massive turnout" at national wrestling competitions this year.

However, for young women like Tanu Malik, fear has become an inescapable part of being in the profession.

Others feel deflated and say the protests have come at a huge personal cost for them.

Shiksha Kharab, a gold medallist at the Asian Championship, says it caused disruptions in training because of which young wrestlers have lost a crucial year.

But Sakshi Malik has no regrets.." *—BBC News*

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

US mountaineer found mummified in Peru after 22 yrs

NEW YORK, 9 JULY

The preserved body of an American mountaineer - who disappeared 22 years ago while scaling a snowy peak in Peru - has been found after being exposed by climate change-induced ice melt, police said Monday. William Stampfl was reported missing in June 2002, aged 59, when an avalanche buried his climbing party on the mountain Huascaran, which stands more than 6,700 metres high. Search and rescue efforts were fruitless. Peruvian police said his remains were finally exposed by ice melt on the Cordillera Blanca range of the Andes. Stampfl's body, as well as his clothes, harness and boots had been well-preserved by the cold, according to images distributed by police. His passport was found among his possessions, allowing police to identify the body. *—AFP*

Student from Andhra drowns in waterfalls in US

AMARAVATI, 9 JULY

A student from Andhra Pradesh G Sai Surya Avinash accidentally slipped into a waterfall and died in the US recently. The Consulate General of India in New York said Avinash from Chitalya in East Godavari district, drowned on Saturday, 7 July at Barberville Falls in Albany, New York. "We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of Mr. Sai Surya Avinash Gadde, a student at Trine University, who drowned on 7 July at Barberville Falls, Albany, NY," the Consulate said in a post on X on Tuesday. Extending condolences to the deceased student's family and friends, the Consulate noted that it is extending all the necessary assistance to repatriate Avinash's mortal remains to India. *—PTIv*

Illegal fireworks explodes in Philippines, 27 hurt

ZAMBOANGA, 9 JULY

At least 27 people, including 19 police and other government personnel, were injured when a large pile of confiscated illegal fireworks exploded in a powerful blast in the southern Philippines, damaging houses, hotels and an international airport, officials said Tuesday. Two of the victims of Monday afternoon's explosion were in serious condition in a hospital in the southern port city of Zamboanga, where the mayor ordered an investigation into why the planned controlled destruction of the fireworks by police ordnance experts turned into a massive blast. Police explosives experts were piling the fireworks in a clearing near a marine firing range for a controlled detonation. *—AP*

Pak: TikTok deletes 20 million videos for rule violation

ISLAMABAD, 9 JULY

TikTok has released its Community Guidelines Enforcement Report for the first quarter of 2024, revealing that it took action against 20.2 million videos in Pakistan alone for violating its community guidelines, Ary News reported. The platform removed 66,997,307 videos worldwide during the January-March period of 2024, representing about 0.9 per cent of all uploaded content. The majority of these removals were made possible through automated detection technologies, with a significant number of videos later reinstated upon review, as per ARY News. A substantial portion of these, 129,335,793 videos, were identified and removed through automated detection technologies, while 6,042,287 videos were reinstated upon further review, according to TikTok Q1 2024 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report. *—ANI*

France to lead new right-wing group at EU

Centre-right, Left groups still hold majority in EU Parliament

BRUSSELS, 9 JULY

Far-right parties from 12 countries, including France's National Rally and Hungary's ruling Fidesz, announced on Monday that they have joined together to form a new bloc in the European Parliament and plan to become a major political force.

The European Parliament moved perceptibly to the right following Europe-wide elections a month ago as many voters abandoned the business-friendly liberals and environmentalist Greens. Mainstream centre-right and centre-left groups still hold the majority though.

The new bloc, dubbed Patriots for Europe, is made up of 84 EU lawmakers and will be led by Jordan Bardella, the 28-year-old protégé of Marine Le Pen.

Far-right parties from 12 countries, including France's National Rally and Hungary's ruling Fidesz, announce that they have joined together to form a new bloc in the European Parliament *PHOTO: PTI*

Right-wing parties from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain are also involved. Forming a group brings parties more influence, money and the possibility of coveted posts on parliamentary committees.

Bardella said the Patriots "represent hope for the tens of millions of citizens in the European nations who value their identity, their sovereignty and their freedom". He vowed the group would work "to retake our institutions and reorient policies to serve our nations and peoples."

At a news conference, senior party officials laid out a vision of a group that opposes power being centralised in Brussels – home to the EU's main institutions – or having "to suffer the diktats of the European Commission," the EU's powerful executive branch. *—AP*

Macron keeps France's PM in place for 'stability'

PARIS, 9 JULY

President Emmanuel Macron refused the resignation of France's Prime Minister, asking him on Monday to remain temporarily as the head of the government after a chaotic election result left the government in limbo.

Voters split the legislature on the left, centre and far right, leaving no faction even close to the majority needed to form a government.

Macron gambled that his decision to call an early election would give France a "moment of clarification," but the outcome showed the opposite, less than three weeks before the start of the Paris Olympics, when the country will be under an international spotlight.

Emmanuel Macron *PHOTO: X@CollinRugg*

Aurélien Rousseau, a newly elected lawmaker from the New Popular Front and former minister in Macron's government acknowledged disagreements within the leftist alliance over the government formation, but said the alliance could eventually reach an agreement. *—AP*

Taiwan to produce kamikaze drones

TAIPEI, 9 JULY

- Taiwan will also boost its military capabilities by launching mass production of domestically designed attack drones.

Amid daily Chinese provocations in Taiwan, Ministry of National Defense (MND) has decided to invest in the mass production of domestically designed loitering munitions, also known as "kamikaze drones," Taiwan News reported. This move comes after the ministry determined that the number of similar weapons purchased from the United States was insufficient to adequately defend against a potential invasion by China.

On 18 June, the US State Department announced that it had approved the sale of 720 Switchblade 300 Anti-Personnel and Anti-Armor Loitering Missile Systems and 291 ALTIUS 600M-V Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to Taiwan.

However, according to a military source, with the increasing Chinese military threat, an internal assessment concluded that the number of various attack drones provided by the US is still insufficient for Taiwan's defense needs, Taiwan News reported, citing Liberty Times.

Therefore, Taiwan will also boost its military capabilities by launching mass production of domestically designed attack drones. The MND plans to include funding for the production of Type-1 and Type-2 kamikaze drones in its 2025 budget. *—ANI*

Russian missile attacks kill at least 31

KYIV, 9 JULY

Russian missiles blasted cities across Ukraine on Monday, damaging the country's largest children's hospital and other buildings in a fierce assault that interrupted heart surgeries and forced young cancer patients to take their treatments outdoors. At least 31 people were killed, officials said.

The daytime barrage targeted five Ukrainian cities with more than 40 missiles of different types, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on social media. Ukraine's air force said it intercepted 30 missiles. More than 150 people were wounded.

It was Russia's heaviest bombardment of Kyiv in almost four months, hitting seven of the city's 10 districts. At least seven people were killed in the capital, including two staff members at the hospital. Strikes in Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy's birthplace in central Ukraine, killed 10.

Rescuers and volunteers clean up the rubble and search for victims after Russian missile hit main children hospital Okhmadit in Ukraine *PHOTO: PTI*

The attack on the Okhmatdyt children's hospital caused debris to fall into heart patients' open chests in the middle of surgery. Cancer patients had their beds wheeled into parks and onto the streets. *—AP*

Hungary PM meets Xi; Ukraine war on agenda

BEIJING, 9 JULY

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban paid a surprise "peace visit" to Beijing and met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

"China is a key power in creating the conditions for peace in the Russia-Ukraine war," Orban posted on the social media platform X after his meeting with the Chinese President on Monday.

"This is why I came to meet with President Xi in Beijing, just two months after his official visit to Budapest," said the leader of Hungary. *—AP*

Hamas warns of threat to ceasefire talks

DEIR-AL-BALAH, 9 JULY

Israeli forces advanced deeper into the Gaza Strip's largest city in pursuit of militants who had regrouped there, sending thousands of Palestinians fleeing on Monday from an area ravaged in the early weeks of the nine-month-long war.

Hamas warned that the latest raids and displacement in Gaza City could lead to the collapse of long-running negotiations over a cease-fire and hostage release, after the two sides had appeared to have narrowed the gaps in recent days.

Israeli troops were again battling militants in areas that the army said had been largely cleared months ago in northern Gaza.

The military ordered evacuations ahead of the raids, but Palestinians said nowhere feels safe. Most of the population of 2.3 million has been displaced, often multiple times. Hundreds of thousands are packed into sweltering tent camps.

Israel ordered the evacuation of northern Gaza in the first weeks of the war and has prevented most people from returning. But hundreds of thousands of Palestinians remain, living in shelters or the shells of homes. *—AP*

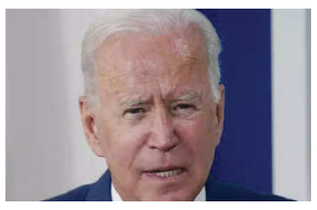
White House spars with reporters on Parkinson's specialist visits

WASHINGTON, 9 JULY

The White House sparred with reporters on Monday over a Parkinson's specialist visiting the building eight times in eight months, as reflected in the visitors' log.

"I am feeling a little miffed around here about how information has been shared with the press corps by him," a reporter asked White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre during her daily news conference.

The White House visitors' log suggests that Parkinson's specialist Dr Kevin Cannard visited the building eight times in eight months. The reporters wanted to know if President Joe Biden was seen by the Parkinson's specialist.



Joe Biden *PHOTO: PTI*

"It does not matter how hard you push me, it does not matter how angry you get with me, I am not going to confirm a name. It does not matter if it is even in the log. I am not going to do that from here. What I can share with you is that the president has seen a neurologist for his physical three times," Jean-Pierre told the reporters. "I am not going to devolve somebody's name or confirm someone," Jean-Pierre said. *—PTI/ Politico*

NATO, Asian partners moving closer under US leadership

WASHINGTON, 9 JULY

In the third year of the war in Ukraine, NATO is set to deepen relations with its four Indo-Pacific partners, which, although not part of the military alliance, are gaining prominence as Russia and China forge closer ties to counter the United States and the two Koreas support opposing sides of the conflict in Europe.

The leaders of New Zealand, Japan and South Korea for the third year in a row will attend the NATO summit, which starts Tuesday in Washington, DC, while Australia will send its deputy prime minister.

"Increasingly, partners in Europe see challenges halfway around the world in Asia as being relevant to them, just as partners in Asia see challenges halfway around the world in Europe as being relevant to them," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said. *—AP*

Aus appoints envoy for combatting antisemitism

MELBOURNE, 9 JULY

The Australian government named a special envoy on Tuesday to confront a rise in antisemitism across the country since the Israel-Hamas war began.

A similar envoy will soon be appointed to challenge Islamophobia in Australia and both will promote social cohesion, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told reporters at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

Albanese's own Sydney office has been targeted with pro-Palestinian graffiti as rival activists clash over the Israeli-Hamas war in Australian cities and university campuses.

Anthony Albanese *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

Albanese appointed Jillian Segal, a Sydney lawyer and business executive, to be "special envoy to combat antisemitism in Australia" for three years. She will consult with community groups and report back to Albanese and Multicultural Affairs Minister Andrew Giles.

Segal called statistics on antisemitism in Australia "shocking". *—AP*

US urges India to probe Father Stan's death

WASHINGTON, 9 JULY

Three American lawmakers have introduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives, encouraging India to pursue an independent investigation into the arrest, incarceration and death of Father Stan, a human rights activist who died in custody on 5 July, 2021.

Introduced by US Congressman Juan Vargas along with lawmakers Jim McGovern and Andre Carson, the resolution expresses concern at the alleged misuse of anti-terror laws to target human rights defenders and political opponents, applauds a recent ruling by the Supreme Court of India to suspend a controversial colonial-era sedition law and urges India's Parliament to make the suspension permanent.

The resolution "makes it clear to the Indian government and all governments around the world that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. *—PTI*

AWARE OF UK'S INTENTION TO END DEPORTATION SCHEME: RWANDA

KIGALI, 9 JULY

Rwanda's government says it is aware of the United Kingdom's intention to terminate its plan to deport asylum-seekers to the East African country.In a statement late on Monday, the office of the Rwandan government spokesman said the deal had been initiated by the UK "to address the crisis of irregular migration affecting the UK -- a problem of the UK, not Rwanda". This is the first time Rwandan authorities are officially commenting on plans by the UK's new Labour Party government to cancel the scheme, which drew criticism from human rights watchdogs and others as cruel and inhumane. *—PTI*

RECORD TEMPARATURE

US: Death Valley sees tourists flock amid many deaths due to heat

DEATH VALLEY, 9 JULY

Hundreds of Europeans touring the American West and adventurers from around the United States are still being drawn to Death Valley National Park, even though the desolate region is being punished by a dangerous heat wave

The heat wave had also resulted in death of a motorcyclist over the weekend.

French, Spanish, English and Swiss tourists left their air-conditioned rental cars and motorhomes on Monday to take photographs of the barren landscape so different than the snow-capped mountains and rolling green hills they know back home.

The heat wave had also resulted in death of a motorcyclist over the weekend *PHOTO: ANADOLU*

The early US heat wave came as the global temperature in June was record warm for the 13th straight month and marked the 12th straight month that the world was 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, the European climate service Copernicus said.

The other four were treated at the scene. Emergency medical helicopters were unable to respond because the aircraft cannot generally fly safely over 120 F (48.8 C), officials said. The largest national park outside Alaska, Death Valley is considered one of the most extreme environments in the world. The hottest temperature ever officially recorded on Earth was 134 F (56.67 C) in July 1913 in Death Valley, though some experts dispute that measurement and say the real record was 54.4 C, recorded there in July 2021. *—AP*

Beryl weakens after storming into Texas

HOUSTON, 9 JULY

After tropical storm Beryl slammed into Texas early on Monday, knocking out power to nearly three million homes and businesses and killing several people, it moved east and weakened to a tropical depression, the National Hurricane Centre said on Monday evening.

Flooding, rains and tornadoes were possible across portions of eastern Texas, Western Louisiana and Arkansas. The fast-moving tempest threatened to carve a harsh path over several more states in coming days.

Texas state and local officials warned it could take several days to restore power after Beryl came ashore as a Category-1 hurricane and toppled 10 transmission lines and knocked down trees that took down power lines. *—AP*

Rupee gains 1 paisa to settle at 83.49 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

The rupee inched up one paisa at 83.49 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday as gains from strong domestic equities and sliding global crude prices were negated by a surging greenback overseas. At the inter-bank foreign exchange market, the rupee started slightly up at 83.49 and hit an intra-day high of 83.47 and a low of 83.51 against the American currency during the session. It finally settled at 83.49 against the dollar, registering a gain of one paisa over the previous close. On Monday, the rupee settled at 83.50 against the US dollar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.06 per cent to 104.72. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.66 per cent to USD 85.18 per barrel. *—PTI*

Gold falls by ₹100 to ₹73,310 per 10 g; silver rises ₹180

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Gold prices fell by Rs 100 to Rs 73,310 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid weak global cues, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had settled at Rs 73,410 per 10 grams on Monday. However, silver prices jumped by Rs 180 to Rs 94,450 per kg from Rs 94,270 per kg in the previous session. Silver prices are expected to outperform the yellow metal in the near future, Parmar added. On the overseas front, spot gold at Comex traded at USD 2,362 per ounce, down USD 11 per ounce against the previous close. However, silver was quoted higher at USD 31.03 per ounce. In the previous session, it had ended at USD 30.93 per ounce. "Gold prices traded lower ahead of the Fed member speech and US inflation data. The silver prices at domestic as well as global front traded higher tracking strong base metal and risk-on moods," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said. *—PTI*

L&T bags big order from Hindustan Shipyard Ltd

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Larsen & Toubro on Tuesday said it has bagged a 'significant' order from Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL) for part construction of two Fleet Support Ships (FSS). Orders in the range of Rs 1,000 crore to Rs 2,500 crore range are classified as 'significant' by the company. Indian Navy had signed a contract with HSL for the design and construction of five FSS for the Indian Navy in August, 2023. FSS are specialised naval vessels, which provide logistics and material support to the naval task force at sea. With more than 220 metre in length and approximately 45,000 tonne displacement, FSS would be amongst the largest vessels in the Indian Naval fleet. L&T will construct the two FSS at its Greenfield shipyard at Kattupalli, near Chennai on the east coast. It is the country's most modern shipyard, designed in-house and built to globally benchmark technological practices. *—PTI*

Eastern Railways earns ₹953 cr of revenue in Q1

KOLKATA, 9 JULY

Eastern Railway has earned over Rs 953 crore of passenger revenue in the first quarter of the 2024-25 financial year, an official said on Tuesday. During the April-June quarter of the current fiscal, the Kolkata-headquartered ER achieved a growth of 9.97 per cent in revenue from passenger movement as compared to the year-ago period, he said. "Passenger revenue for the first quarter of 2024-25 stands at Rs 953.24 crore, compared to Rs 866.79 crore earned during the same period of the last fiscal," the ER official said in a statement. The total number of originating passengers from the April-June period of 2024 stood at 2,87,654, marking a 3.36 per cent increase from the previous year's figure of 2,78,309. *—PTI*

Sensex, Nifty hit new all-time closing high

Sensex settles at closing peak of 80,351.64

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Tuesday, hitting their fresh record closing levels on the back of gains in auto and FMCG shares and foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 391.26 points or 0.49 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 80,351.64. During the day, it jumped 436.79 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 80,397.17.

The NSE Nifty went up by 112.65 points or 0.46 per cent to 24,433.20 -- its record closing high. During the day, it surged 123.05 points or 0.50 per cent to hit a new record peak of 24,443.60.

Among Sensex shares, Maruti Suzuki India jumped over 6 per cent amid reports that the UP government waived registration taxes on hybrid cars as part of its initiative to promote environmentally friendly vehicles in the state. Mahindra & Mahindra, Titan, Sun Pharma, ITC, Nestle and Tata Motors were the other big gainers.

Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finance and JSW Steel were among the laggards.

Nestle, Tata & ITC were among biggest gainers *PHOTO: PTI*

- NSE Nifty went up by 112.65 points or 0.46 per cent to 24,433.20 -- its record closing high. During the day, it surged 123.05 points to hit a new record peak of 24,443.60

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled higher while Hong Kong ended lower. European markets were trading mostly lower. US markets ended mostly higher on Monday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 60.98 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.51 per cent to USD 85.31 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark declined 36.22 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at 79,960.38 on Monday. The NSE Nifty dipped 3.30 points or 0.01 per cent to 24,320.55. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

MARUTI JUMPS 7% AS AUTO STOCKS IN HUGE DEMAND

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Auto stocks were in huge demand on Tuesday, with Maruti Suzuki India surging nearly 7 per cent, amid reports that the UP government has waived registration taxes on hybrid cars as part of its initiative to promote environmentally friendly vehicles in the state.

Shares of Maruti jumped 6.60 per cent to settle at Rs 12,820.20 on the BSE. During the day, it soared 7.72 per cent to Rs 12,955.

At the NSE, it climbed 6.51 per cent to Rs 12,807.

As per reports, Uttar Pradesh government has announced a waiver of road tax on hybrid cars.

Buying was seen in other auto stocks. Shares of Mahindra & Mahindra went up 2.51 per cent, Hero MotoCorp climbed 1.53 per cent, TVS Motor Company (1.36 per cent), Tata Motors (1.24 per cent) and Bajaj Auto (0.18 per cent) on the BSE. *—PTI*

India added 4.7 crore jobs in FY24: RBI data

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

India added nearly 4.7 crore jobs during 2023-24, taking the total number of employed people to 64.33 crore spread over 27 sectors covering the entire economy, according to Reserve Bank data.

The number of employed people was 59.67 crore at the end of March 2023, said the RBI's update on 'Measuring Productivity at the Industry Level-The India KLEMS [Capital (K), Labour (L), Energy (E), Material (M) and Services (S)] Database'.

Using the Tornqvist Aggregation formula, the RBI said the annual growth in employment during 2023-24 was 6 per cent compared to 3.2 per cent in the year-ago period.

In the last five years, the India KLEMS database revealed that total employment increased from 53.44 crore in 2019-20 to 64.33 crore during the previous fiscal.

The data for financial 2022-23 is a provisional estimate of productivity for the total economy.

The 'agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing' employed 25.3 crore individuals, up from 24.82 crore in 2021-22, the fiscal 2022-23 data suggested.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Construction, trade, and transport and storage were among the leading employment provider segments in 2022-23.

The RBI said the document describes the procedures, methodologies and approaches used in the construction of India KLEMS database version 2024.

"The production and publication of India KLEMS database are meant to support empirical research in the area of economic growth and its sources," the RBI said.

Most importantly, the database is meant to support the conduct of policies aimed at supporting the acceleration of productivity growth in the Indian economy. *—PTI*

Defence body lauds growth in defence production & exports

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) today hailed the remarkable growth in India's defence production and exports, as announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 5 July, 2024.

With domestic defence production surging to a record-breaking Rs 1.27 lakh crore in FY 2023-24, marking a 16.7 per cent increase over the previous year and a staggering 60 per cent growth compared to 2019-20, India has solidified its position as a rising global defence powerhouse. Simultaneously, defence exports have soared to an unprecedented Rs 21083 crore, marking a nearly 35 per cent increase over the previous fiscal.

The synergy between the public and private sectors has been a cornerstone of this success. Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) have leveraged their legacy and expertise, while the private sector has brought in innovation and agility. This harmonious collaboration has propelled India to the forefront of global defence manufacturing.

While lauding these achievements, SIDM emphasises the need for continued focus on innovation, technology advancements, and robust supply chains. *—ANI*

PHOTO: ANI

'MISLEADING CLAIMS'

HC dismisses plea against Tata SIA Airlines, AI merger

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Delhi High Court has dismissed a plea challenging the Competition Commission of India's (CCI) rejection of objections to the merger between Tata SIA Airlines Limited and Air India Limited.

CCI had earlier dismissed the application noting the absence of any substantive evidence to back these allegations. Consequently, through an order dated 15 December, 2023, the application was closed under Section 26(2) of the Act by CCI, noted the Delhi High Court.

The bench of Justice Sanjeev Narula said the claims made by the petitioner appear to be designed to manipulate or mislead.

"The claims are made without any regard for truth and appear to be designed to manipulate or mislead. This approach not only discredits the Petitioner's credibility but also burdens the legal system unnecessarily. Therefore, in the Court's view, given the absence of any substantiated claims and the apparent malicious intent behind the allegations, the present petition lacks merit," said the court.

Additionally, the petition includes numerous unsubstantiated, wild and scandalous allegations against the Prime Minister and a former Chief Justice of India, none of which are supported by documentary evidence. *—ANI*

Merger was dismissed due to lack of evidence *PHOTO: X*

SIP FLOW CLIMBS TO ₹21,000 CRORE IN JUNE: AMFI

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

The Mutual fund investors put in Rs 21,262 crore in Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) in June, an industry body said on Tuesday.

This is higher than the Rs 20,904 crore in May, the Association of Mutual Funds of India (Amfi) said.

The overall Assets under Management (AUM) from SIPs grew to Rs 12.43 lakh crore, which can be attributed to both the mark to market growth due to the surge in market and also to the new inflows, Amfi Chief Executive Venkat Chalasani told reporters.

A total of 55 lakh new SIPs were registered in June, taking the total number of SIPs to 8.98 crore, he said, adding that 32.35 lakh matured or were shut down. The overall AUM of the MF industry stood at over Rs 61.33 lakh crore as of June. *— PTI*

Industrial, warehouse supply to rise 14%: Report

MUMBAI, 9 JULY

Industrial and warehouse logistics park (IWLP) supply is estimated to grow 13-14 per cent year-on-year at around 424 million square feet this fiscal in the eight primary markets, driven by strong demand, an ICRA report said on Tuesday.

It said the absorbtion is likely to be 47 million square feet in FY25 as compared to 37 million square feet in the previous fiscal.

The sector continues to witness a sustained demand from third-party logistics (3PL) and manufacturing sectors, which together accounted for around 65 per cent of the total leased area as of March 2024 while the share of e-commerce stood at 15 per cent. The growth projections are based on a sample set of ICRA's rated-portfolio that includes 58 entities across 17 cities having total leasable area of around 34-million sq ft.

- It said the absorbtion is likely to be 47 million square feet in FY25 as compared to 37 million square feet in the previous fiscal

It also said that among the eight primary markets, around 42 of the warehousing stock as of March 2024 was contributed by Mumbai and Delhi-NCR while the overall occupancy remained healthy at around 90 per cent.

The vacancy in the eight primary markets stood at 10 per cent in FY24 and is likely to remain at a similar level in FY25, the report said. *—PTI*

FY25 WILL SEE 7% TO 9% GROWTH IN 2-WHEELER SALES

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

The volume growth of the two-wheeler industry will be lower than the last years with a growth rate of around 7-9 per cent in the Financial Year (FY) 2025, the CareEdge Ratings anticipated in its recent report. In the last financial year of 2024, the volume growth of the industry was recorded at 9.8 per cent.

The report added that the growth in FY25 is expected to be driven by higher Electric Vehicle (EV) sales supported by the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024, the expectation of interest rate cuts in the second half of FY25, and strong demand for new model launches.

While the total sales volume in FY24 stood at 21.43 million units. *—ANI*

'PRIORITISE FUNDS'

NATHEALTH & ATMA seek more benefits this Budget

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Healthcare industry body NATHEALTH on Tuesday urged the government to raise public health expenditure to above 2.5 per cent of GDP and rationalise GST for healthcare with a uniform 5 per cent rate slab.

In its pre-budget recommendations, NATHEALTH also called for the implementation of "transformative measures that focus on strengthening healthcare infrastructure and making strategic investments to address both demand and supply-side challenges".

As the nation progresses toward achieving a USD 5 trillion economy, providing quality healthcare for the entire population is a prerequisite.

Addressing healthcare challenges will require an estimated 2 billion square feet of advanced healthcare infrastructure, he added.

ATMA asks govt to restrict import of waste tyres

Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) on Tuesday said there is a need to restrict import of waste tyres into India, saying the country is becoming a 'dumping ground' scrap tyres.

The import of waste/scrap tyres into India has increased by more than five times since FY20-21, ATMA said in its pre-budget submission to the finance ministry.

India has emerged as one of the leading manufacturers of tyres in the world with domestic manufacturing of tyres surpassing 200 million per annum. *—PTI*

CCPA ASKS YATRA TO REFUND ₹ 2.5CR TICKETS FROM COVID

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has ordered online travel agency Yatra to speed up pending refunds for flight cancellations during the Covid-19 lockdown, the consumer affairs ministry said on Tuesday.

In its 27 June order, CCPA directed Yatra to establish five dedicated seats at the National Consumer Helpline to contact remaining passengers about their pending refunds. The company will bear the costs of this arrangement. This action follows a 2020 Supreme Court ruling mandating immediate refunds for tickets booked during the lockdown period. CCPA initiated suo-moto action against Yatra following numerous grievances lodged through regarding non-refund of cancelled air tickets. *—PTI*

AMID HEATWAVE & RAINS

Veggie prices may rise as crops destroyed

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Prices of tomatoes will rise more in north India, including Uttar Pradesh, Delhi NCR and Haryana. Farmers say tomato crops have been damaged due to heavy rainfall in the Muradabad region.

The region is known for its extensive tomato farming, with tomatoes from here reaching Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi NCR, and Haryana. However, the recent heavy rains in Muradabad have destroyed tomatoes in the fields.

Farmers of the region told ANI that tomatoes are rotting on plants and the waterlogged fields are decaying the plants. As a result, farmers are uprooting their tomato crops to make way for other cultivation.

Heavy rains have affected the prices of vegetables *PHOTO: PTI*

The farmers also reported that earlier, the intense heatwave had already damaged the tomatoes, and now the untimely rains have completely ruined the crop.

They also added that earlier also they had not received good prices for their tomatoes, and now any hopes of profit have been dashed by the continuous rains. Farmers are now pleading for government assistance.

The farmers and vegetable sellers in Ajmer, Rajasthan also faced the impact of the weather as the monsoon season has begun to impact vegetable prices in the markets.

There has been a notable increase in the prices of tomatoes, potatoes, and onions. With the onset of July rains, vegetable prices have surged significantly.

In June, tomato prices were between 40 to 50 rupees per kilo, but they have now soared to 75 to 80 rupees per kilo.

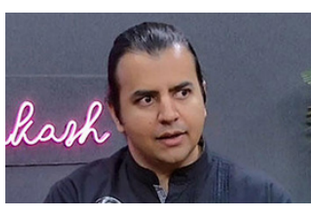
Similarly, potato prices have risen to 25 to 30 rupees per kilo, and potato prices have reached 40 to 45 rupees per kilo. Heavy rains in several states have affected the prices of vegetables. *—PTI*

India produces 20% of world's data sold to US: Ola CEO

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Ola founder and CEO Bhavish Aggarwal highlighted that India which constitutes 20 per cent of the world's population produces 20 per cent of the world's digital data but only one-tenth of it is stored here and the remaining data is sold to us in dollars after being processed by tech giants outside the country.

In an exclusive chat with ANI, Aggarwal said, "Everybody in India pays in dollars. You know, if I, the broader point here, the irony, India produces 20 per cent of the world's digital data because we are the 20 per cent of the world's population. You know, thanks to 4g and Jio and all India map data produced.



Bhavish Aggarwal *PHOTO: ANI*

So we produce 20 per cent of the world's data".

"Actually, we also, as Indians, Our strength in the world of Artificial Intelligence is going to be that we are the largest population and data is what creates intelligence in AI. So we should actually produce even more data because not just are we 20 per cent of the world's population, but we're also young," the OLA CEO said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: @KEEGANBRADLEY1

Keegan Bradley named US captain for Ryder Cup 2025

NEW YORK, 9 JULY

Keegan Bradley has been named US captain for the 2025 Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black in New York, the PGA of America announced on Monday after a search process during which it also talked to Tiger Woods about taking the job. Bradley succeeds twice major champion Zach Johnson as US captain after the latter faced plenty of criticism following the last edition of the biennial event where his squad failed to get the job done against Europe. "We are confident that with Keegan at the helm, the 2025 U.S. Ryder Cup Team will compete at Bethpage with the same confidence and determination that has defined his career."—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Nagal moves to 2nd round of ATP Challenger

BRAUNSCHWEIG, 9 JULY

India's top-ranked tennis player Sumit Nagal moved to the second round with a facile win over Brazil's Felipe Meligeni Alves in the Braunschweig ATP challenger here on Tuesday.The Olympic-bound Nagal, seeded second, cruised to a 6-1 6-4 win over Alves in the clay event.The world number 73 will take on Argentina's Pedro Cachin in the round of 16 on Wednesday.The tournament will serve as preparation for the Paris Olympics, which begins later this month at the Roland Garros Stadium.Last week, Nagal had made a first-round exit from Wimbledon.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Anderson is keen to finish high on West Indies

LONDON, 9 JULY

It doesn't matter if James Anderson takes a bunch of West Indies wickets for England in the first test at Lord's from Wednesday. The series opener will be Anderson's 188th and last test and he will transition into England's fast-bowling mentor. Anderson said he was trying hard not to think of his pending forced retirement. "The big thing for me this week is wanting to play well, bowl well, and get a win," he said. "I'm sure the emotions during the week will change, but right now that's what I'm trying to focus on to stop myself crying."—*PTI*

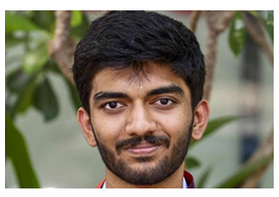


PHOTO: PTI

Test of time for Gukesh to excel in faster version

ZAGREB, 9 JULY

World Championship challenger D Gukesh will look to improve his billing in the faster version as Vidit Gujrathi joins him for the Superunited rapid and blitz chess tournament, a part of the Grand Chess Tour. Set to meet Chinese Ding Liren in Singapore on November 20th to decide the next world champion, Gukesh has repeatedly proved his superior ability in the Classical format. But when it comes to a faster version, the Indian is yet to find his place amongst the world elite. —*PTI*

Gambhir appointed as Indian team head coach

42-year-old Gautam Gambhir is a key member of the 2011 ODI

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Gautam Gambhir PHOTO: PTI

World Cup-winning opening batter Gautam Gambhir was on Tuesday named as the head coach of the Indian men's cricket team, replacing Rahul Dravid at the top post.

Dravid quit the post after India's recent T20 World Cup triumph in the Americas.

"It is with immense pleasure that I welcome Mr @GautamGambhir as the new Head Coach of the Indian Cricket Team. Modern-day cricket has evolved rapidly, and Gautam has witnessed this changing landscape up close. Having endured the grind and excelled in various roles throughout his career, I am confident that Gautam is the ideal person to steer Indian Cricket forward," BCCI secretary Jay Shah posted in his 'X' account."His clear vision for #TeamIndia, coupled with his vast experience, positions him perfectly to take on this exciting and most sought-after coaching role. The @BCCI fully supports him as he embarks on this new journey."

The 42-year-old Gambhir, a key member of the 2011 ODI World Cup-winning Indian side, led Kolkata Knight Riders to IPL titles in 2012 and 2014. He was the mentor of the KKR team that won the IPL title in 2024. Reacting to his appointment, the former left-handed batsman conveyed his gratitude to BCCI secretary and stated that he was elated to be a part of this journey and the entire team together will strive for excellence and newer heights.

Gambhir takes over from Dravid, under whom India reached the final of the last three ICC events (the ICC World Test Championship in 2023, the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in 2023, and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in 2024). —*PTI*

Djokovic destroys Rune in fourth round

LONDON, 9 JULY

Novak Djokovic PHOTO: X / @WIMBLEDON

Novak Djokovic produced his best display so far at this year's Wimbledon to dispatch Denmark's Holger Rune 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 and reach the quarter-finals before launching a tirade against 'disrespectful' fans on Monday.

The 37-year-old Serb won the opening 12 points of his Centre Court clash against the 15th seed and apart from a minor blip at the end of the second set was clinical throughout as he reached the last eight here for the 15th time in his career.But the seven-time champion was riled by some of the crowd who greeted Rune's occasional moments of brilliance with Pro-Rune chant was 'an excuse' to boo m

"Well to all the fans that have respect and stayed here tonight thank you very much from the bottom of my heart I appreciate it," Djokovic said.

Vekic reaches semi-finals

Donna Vekic beat Lulu Sun 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 on Tuesday and will face the winner of the match between Italian Jasmine Paolini, the No. 7 seed, and American Emma Navarro, the No. 19 seed, in the next round-Croat Donna Vekic won against New Zealander qualifier Lulu Sun 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 to reach the last 4 of Wimbledon at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Londres on Tuesday afternoon. Vekic, ranked No. 37, will face the winner of the match between Italian Paolini, the No. 7 seed, and American Emma Navarro, the No. 19 seed, next. —*PTI*

INDIA VS ZIMBABWE

India eye win against Zimbabwe

HARARE, 9 JULY

Yashasvi Jaiswal PHOTO: PTI

India will find it tough to choose between Yashasvi Jaiswal's seemingly effortless flamboyance and Abhishek Sharma's uber-cool aggression at the top when they rejig their combination to make space for World Cup-winning squad members in the third T20 International against Zimbabwe here on Wednesday.

The arrival of Jaiswal, Sanju Samson, and Shivam Dube, all of whom were part of the main team during the title-winning run last month, gives the Indian team a formidable look in the most important game of the series as visitors look to press home the advantage after the booster shot of a series-leveling 100-run victory in the second match.

Abhishek, the left-handed opener, did enough to live up to his pre-series hype with a 46-ball century in only his second game and did look the part opening the innings.

However, Jaiswal, with a handsome strike rate of 161 plus in 17 T20I matches, including a hundred and four half-centuries, does have the first claim to be skipper Shubman Gill's opening partner by being the reserve opener of the first-choice T20 team.

Although rare it is not uncommon for batters to be dropped in the very next match after a milestone innings.

A case in point was Manoj Tiwary, immediately after his maiden ODI hundred against the West Indies in 2011, and Karun Nair after his triple hundred in a Test match against England in 2016.

But skipper Gill is unlikely to let that happen with his best friend since their U-14 days and someone who scored his first international ton with a willow borrowed from the former.

So, it could well be a case of one of the two southpaws batting at one drop. Sanju Samson, who normally bats at No. 3 for Rajasthan Royals, might come in at No.5, while Ruturaj Gaikwad, who batted at No.3, will probably drop down a place to No.4.

As far as the changes in the playing eleven are concerned, Jaiswal is likely to replace B Sai Sudharsan, who was selected only for the first two games.

Samson will come in place of Dhruv Jurel, who had a good outing behind the stumps.

Dube, the only player who was a part of the T20 World Cup playing XI, is likely to walk in to replace Riyan Parag. India vs Zimbabwe match Starts at 4:30 pm IST. —*PTI*

India Women beat SA Women by 10 wickets

CHENNAI, 9 JULY

Pooja Vastrakar PHOTO: PTI

Pooja Vastrakar returned with career-best figures of 4/13 as India shot South Africa out for a mere 84 in the third and final women's T20 International here on Tuesday, which brought their 3-match T20I series level to 1-1. Having conceded a hefty defeat to Laura Wolvaardt's side in the series opener, and then the second match got washed out. Harmanpreet Kaur's India took the field at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on July 9 with a fiery intent, and that saw them completely thrash the Proteas by 10 wickets.

With the likes of Mandhana, Harmanpreet, and Shefali Verma enjoying most of the praise for the side's recent successes in their recent Test series triumph over South Africa and then the T20I opener, it was the bowlers who ensured the crucial win for the side on Tuesday. Having won the toss, Harmanpreet decided to bowl first against Wolvaardt's South Africa, and the call brought immense fruit when they bundled the Proteas within just 84 runs. Also, the rain in the city in the past couple of days had made the wicket moist. Things simply went worse for South Africa thereon as they lost the remaining five wickets for just 23 runs. India 85 for 0 (Mandhana 54*, Shafali 27*) beat South Africa 84 (Brits 20, Vastrakar 4-13) by 10 wickets. —*PTI*

'Grinding' England hope for spark against Netherlands

LEIPZIG, 9 JULY

England's forward Harry Kane has struggled this summer in Gareth Southgate's side PHOTO: X / @GARETHSOUTHGATE

England manager Gareth Southgate has led his country to a third semi-final in four major tournaments but ahead of Wednesday's last-four showdown against the Netherlands at Euro 2024, critics of the Three Lions' boring football are mounting. Should England end a 58-year wait to win a major trophy in Berlin on Sunday, supporters would not take umbrage with the team's style, or lack thereof, but the inability of such an array of attacking stars to excite has stunned viewers across the continent.

Southgate's team produced just five shots on target in 240 minutes of action against Switzerland and Slovakia in the prior two rounds, needing penalties and extra-time respectively to progress.

Former England striker Alan Shearer called the team "rotten" after staggering past Slovakia, while French Euro 2000 winner Emmanuel Petit echoed many fans and national media by labeling England "boring".

Told his team was "not easy on the eye" by German reporter, Southgate produced an assortment of reasons.

"I'm sorry for that, but our intention is always to play well with the ball -- in football, you have an opponent that's trying to stop you," he said after the win over Switzerland.

"These are not normal football matches, these are national events with huge pressure, with really young men in the middle of it.

"Our team has been under enormous pressure from the start. They are doing so well."

Southgate pointed to England's opponents using defensive formations and also blamed the grass in Germany for hampering his players.

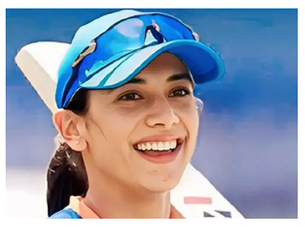
"We're not able to score a load of goals at the moment, but we've played three teams that play a back five, well-organized defenses," he continued. —*PTI*

VICTORIOUS CAMPAIGN

Team India batsman Suryakumar Yadav and wife visit Kapu Marigudi temple in Udupi on Tuesday PHOTO: @SKYXROHIT1

Bumrah named ICC Player of the Month

DUBAI, 9 JULY



Jasprit Bumrah and Smriti Mandhana PHOTO: PTI

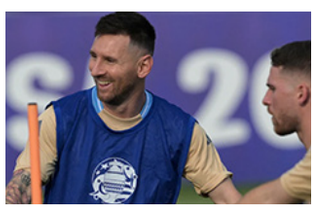
Hero of India's victorious T20 World Cup campaign, Jasprit Bumrah added another feather to his hat when he was on Tuesday named the 'ICC Men's Player of the Month for June'.

It was a double delight for India as women's team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana was also named the 'Women's Player of the Month' by the global body. Mandhana won her first ICC Women's Player of the Month after playing a starring role in India's sweep over South Africa in the ODI series last month.

Bumrah came out on top in the men's vote from compatriot Rohit Sharma and Rahmanullah Gurbaz of Afghanistan, while Mandhana won the women's award by overcoming England's Maia Bouchier and Sri Lanka's Vishmi Gunaratne. Bumrah, who bagged 15 wickets to be adjudged the Player-of-the-Tournament in the T20 global showpiece last month, also claimed the Men's Player of the Month accolade for June, the ICC announced." I am delighted to be named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for June," Bumrah said in the ICC statement." —*PTI*

Copa: Messi will start against Canada

NEW YORK, 9 JULY



Lionel Messi PHOTO: @LEOMESSI

Lionel Messi won't be stopped by a leg injury and will play in Argentina's Copa America semifinal against Canada on Tuesday night.

Messi has been dealing with a right leg problem since the group-stage win over Chile on June 25. He missed the first-round finale four days later but played the entire match in the quarterfinal victory over Ecuador last Thursday.

"Leo is good. He will be playing tomorrow," Albiceleste coach Lionel Scaloni said Monday at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

At 37, Messi has 13 Copa America goals and is four behind the record shared by Argentina's Norberto Méndez and Brazil's Zizinho but hasn't scored in this year's tournament. —*PTI*

ELECTION FOR NEW CHAIRMAN

Jay Shah could leave BCCI for ICC

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

Jay Shah PHOTO: PTI

- Jay Shah might leave his post of honorary secretary at the BCCI to contest elections for International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman elections, scheduled to take place in November later this year, according to reports.

Jay Shah might leave his post of honorary secretary at the BCCI to contest elections for International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman elections, scheduled to take place in November later this year, according to reports.

The ICC is currently headed by incumbent Greg Barclay for four years now and is eligible for another term. But if Shah decides to throw in his hat in the elections, he is going to be elected unopposed. Should Shah win the election, he will become the youngest ICC chairman.

The next ICC annual conference is in Colombo later this month and if reports are to go by, the dates of election for the next chairman could be discussed in the meeting. However, there hasn't been any comment from Shah on this matter.

According to reports, Shah wants to bring in some changes in the way how ICC functions, especially after recent controversies over the organization of the T20 World Cup 2024 that took place in USA and West Indies.

Meanwhile, the ICC too has reportedly amended its constitution as far as the tenure of the chairman is concerned. A newly-elected chairman can stay for three years as opposed to two earlier.

He can be re-elected only once unlike twice before. Shah has been associated with cricket administration since 2009. He had served as the secretary of the Gujarat Cricket Association before joining BCCI in 2015.

His appointment for the post of BCCI secretary came in 2019. After India won the T20 World Cup 2024, Shah had announced a price money of Rs 125 crore for the players and support staff. —*PTI*